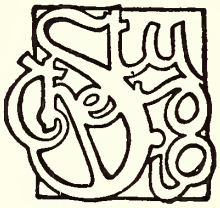
THE 'OLD' WATER-COLOUR SOCIETY

1804–1904



EDITED BY CHARLES HOLME

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PREFATORY NOTE

The reproduction of water-colours in monotint is so unsatisfactory that in dealing with this important subject the Editor has decided to include in this work only coloured reproductions. In making the selection his endeavour has been to render it as representative as possible, and while regretting the inevitable necessity for many omissions from the list, he hopes that a sufficient number of drawings have been presented to afford an insight into the evolution of water-colour art during the history of the Society.

The thanks of the Editor are due to those ladies and gentlemen who have been so good as to assist him in the preparation of this work by the loan of original drawings. In this connection he desires to name Miss Carlisle, Mrs. Todd, General Sir Henry Smyth, Mr. Harold Hartley, Mr. Alexander T. Hollingsworth, Mr. Frederick Macmillan, Dr. Greville MacDonald, Mr. Edward Clifford, Mr. William Newall, Mr. Thomas McLean, Mr. Charles Dowdeswell, Messrs. Thomas Agnew and Sons and Messrs. Ernest Brown and Phillips.

LIST OF REPRODUCTIONS IN COLOUR

A CHRONOLOGICAL LIST OF THE MEMBERS AND ASSOCIATES OF THE ROYAL SOCIETY OF PAINTERS IN WATER COLOURS FROM THE FOUNDATION OF THE SOCIETY IN 1804 TO THE PRESENT TIME

(*N.B.—The names of those whose work is reproduced in the following pages are printed in capital letters*)

Foundation Members 1804–5

- William Sawry Gilpin (*President*, 1804)
- Robert Hills (*Secretary*, 1804)
- John Claude Nattes
- Francis Nicholson
- Nicholas Pocock
- William Henry Pyne
- Samuel Shelley
- Cornelius Varley
- John Varley
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- Joshua Cristall (*President*, 1821)
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- William Havell
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- Stephen Francis Rigaud

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1808	1808	John Augustus Atkinson
1808	1808	William Turner
1809	1810	Thomas Uwins, R.A. (*Secretary*, 1814)
1809	—	William Payne
1809	1810	Edmund Dorrell
1809	1812	Charles Wild (*Secretary*, 1826)
1810	1810	Frederick Nash
1810	1811	PETER DE WINT
1810	1812	A. V. COPLEY FIELDING (*President*, 1831)
1810	1812	William Westall, A.R.A.
1810	—	William Scott
1812	1812	DAVID COX
1812	1812	Luke Clennell
1812	—	Charles Barber
—	1812	JOHN LINNELL
—	1812	Miss Margaret Gouldsmith
—	1812	James Holmes
—	1813	Frederick Mackenzie
—	1813	Henry Richter
—	1813	George Fennel Robson (*President*, 1820)
—	1818	Henry C. Allport
—	1819	Samuel Prout
—	1819	James Stephanoff
1820	—	W. J. Bennet
1820	1821	J. D. Harding
1820	—	William Walker
1821	1823	H. Gastineau
—	1821	Mrs. T. H. Fielding
1822	—	Charles Moore
1822	—	Francis Oliver Finch
1822	1834	GEORGE CATTERMOLE
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—	1823	Miss M. Scott
1823	1823	W. A. Nesfield
1823	—	Richard Hamilton Essex
1823	—	S. Jackson
1823	—	J. Whichelo
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1828	—	Penry Williams
1829	—	Thales Fielding
1829	—	A. Chisholm
—	1829	Miss Eliza Sharpe
—	1829	Miss Louisa Sharpe (Mrs. Seyffarth)
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1835	1857	James Holland
1837	1858	Arthur Glennie
1837	—	W. Lake Price
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1841	1845	George Arthur Fripp (*Secretary*, 1848)
1842	1844	Octavius Oakley
1843	1854	Samuel Palmer
1843	1851	Thomas Miles Richardson
1843	1849	W. Collingwood Smith
1844	1846	Alfred Downing Fripp (*Secretary*, 1870)
1844	—	Douglas Morison
1845	—	William Evans (of Bristol)
1845	—	George Henry Harrison
1845	—	Samuel Rayner
—	1847	Miss Maria Harrison
1847	—	W. F. Rosenberg
1848	1852	George Haydock Dodgson
1848	1849	Edward Duncan
1848	1848	Francis W. Topham
1848	—	David Cox, junior
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1849	—	Mrs. Mary Ann Criddle
1849	—	John Callow
1850	1853	CARL HAAG
1850	1859	Paul Jacob Naftel
1850	—	Miss Nancy Rayner
1851	—	John Burgess, junior
1851	—	John Bostock
1852	1854	SIR JOHN GILBERT, R.A. (*President*, 1871)
1852	—	H. Parsons Riviere
1852	—	Miss Margaret Gillies
1853	1855	Sir Frederick Burton
1853	1861	Walter Goodall
1853	1876	Samuel Phillips Jackson
1853	—	Henry Brandling
1855	1884	William Collingwood
1855	1858	Charles Davidson
1856	1878	George H. Andrews
1857	1880	Samuel Read
1858	1864	Edward A. Goodall
1858	1897	Samuel T. G. Evans
1858	1879	Alfred P. Newton
1860	1862	BIRKET FOSTER
1860	—	Frederick Smallfield
1862	1863	Henry Brittan Willis
1862	1864	ALFRED WILLIAM HUNT
1862	1864	James W. Whittaker
1864	1877	George P. Boyce
1864	1868 / 1886	SIR E. BURNE-JONES
1864	1865	E. S. Lundgren
1864	1866	Frederick Walker, A.R.A.
1865	1870	John D. Watson
1865	—	Frederick J. Shields
1866	1876	Edward Killingworth Johnson
1866	—	Thomas R. Lamont
1867	1876	SIR FRANCIS POWELL
1867	1870	Thomas Danby
1867	1881	Basil Bradley
1869	1887	W. Holman Hunt
1869	1870	GEORGE JOHN PINWELL
1870	1875	William C. T. Dobson, R.A.
1870	—	Arthur H. Marsh
1870	—	William Wood Deane
1871	1881	Albert Goodwin
1871	1883	JOHN W. NORTH, A.R.A.
1871	1881	William Matthew Hale
1871	1883	H. Stacy Marks, R.A.
1871	—	Arthur Boyd Houghton
1871	1901	R. W. Macbeth, R.A.
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1876	1884	R. THORNE WAITE
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1876	—	Otto Weber
1877	—	Edwin Buckman
1877	1896	Arthur Hopkins
1877	—	Cuthbert Rigby
1878	1880	Henry Wallis
1878	1886	Tom Lloyd
1878 / 1896	—	W. E. Lockhart
1878	—	Norman Tayler
1879	1883	HERBERT M. MARSHALL
1879	—	Mrs. Helen Cordelia Angell (*née* Coleman)
1880	—	Walter Field
1880	1896	W. EYRE WALKER
1880	1894	SIR ERNEST A. WATERLOW, R.A. (*President*, 1897)
1880	—	Thomas J. Watson
1881	—	George Du Maurier
1881	1898	Wilmot Pilsbury
1882	1883	Charles Gregory
1882	1890	SAMUEL J. HODSON
1882	1892	Richard Beavis
1882	—	J. Jessop Hardwick
1882	—	Miss Constance Phillott
1883	1883	Sir Edward J. Poynter, P.R.A.
1883	—	Frank Holl, R.A.
1883	—	John R. Burr
1883	—	Henry G. Glindoni
1883	1897	J. Henry Henshall
1883	—	WILLIAM J. WAINWRIGHT
1884	—	ALBERT MOORE
1884	—	Mrs. Mary Lofthouse (*née* Forster)
1885	1891	Charles Robertson
1885	—	Heywood Hardy
1886	—	DAVID MURRAY, R.A.
1886	1898	COLIN BENT PHILLIP
1887	1896	ROBERT W. ALLAN
1887	—	Miss Maud Naftel
—	1888	Sir Frederick (afterwards Lord) Leighton, P.R.A.
1888	1899	Walter Crane
1888	—	Alfred Edward Emslie
1888	—	Miss Edith Martineau
1888	1899	Arthur Melville
1889	—	G. Laurence Bulleid
1889	1898	George Clausen, A.R.A.
1890	1897	C. Napier Hemy, A.R.A.
1891	—	Charles E. Fripp
1891	1895	E. R. HUGHES
1891	1903	Thomas M. Rooke
1892	1894	Lionel Smythe, A.R.A.
1892	1899	ROBERT LITTLE
1893	1894	Hubert von Herkomer, R.A.
1893	—	Miss Rose Barton
1894	1897	J. R. WEGUELIN
1895	—	Edwin A. Abbey, R.A.
1896	1899	J. M. Swan, R.A.
1896	—	H. S. Hopwood
1896	—	Miss Mildred Butler
1898	—	Louis Davis
1898	—	James Paterson
1899	—	EDWIN ALEXANDER
1899	—	MRS. E. STANHOPE FORBES
1899	—	Alfred Parsons, A.R.A.
1900	—	Walter Bayes
1901	—	Miss Minnie Smythe
1901	—	REGINALD BARRATT
1901	1904	R. ANNING BELL
1901	1904	J. WALTER WEST
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1902	—	ARTHUR RACKHAM
1903	—	E. J. Sullivan
1903	—	Miss Alice M. Swan
1904	—	J. S. Sargent, R.A.
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1904	—	F. Cadogan Cowper
1905	—	H. E. Crocket
1905	—	Herbert Alexander

THE HISTORY OF THE ROYAL SOCIETY OF PAINTERS IN WATER-COLOURS

HERE is a close connection between the history of the Royal Society of Painters in Water-Colours and that of the later development of the art of water-colour painting in this country. As the first influential Association which occupied itself especially with the encouragement of this form of practice, it has during the century of its existence played a very important part in the promotion of a proper understanding of the craft, and in the advancement of the position of the artists who have devoted themselves to water-colours. The services it has rendered have been two-fold ; in the first place it provided the workers with a central organisation which helped them to make themselves known to art lovers, and in the second it asserted in an emphatic manner the claims to attention possessed by a technical method which was comparatively a new creation and not directed by any old-established traditions. Full credit is due to the Society for the manner in which it has done its work ; and its authoritative position to-day can be taken as a proof that its strenuous recognition of its responsibilities has been acknowledged by every one who is qualified to pass judgment on its efforts.

It cannot of course be assumed that the actual formation of the English water-colour school resulted from the operations of the Society. This would be claiming for it a little too much ; for before it was instituted there were in this country many artists who were sufficiently distinguished as water-colourists, and there was an efficient if somewhat limited demand for their productions. But by bringing together scattered forces it made possible that united action by which alone a vigorous school of artistic practice can be created ; it showed the value of combination, and it carried to success a movement which might possibly have languished, or even died out, if left unassisted. Moreover, by its periodical exhibitions, in which the painters who sought to introduce innovations into the craft could compare their experiments with the performances which did not depart from the general custom of the profession, it encouraged very valuable

competition between different types of workers and fulfilled an educational mission of undeniable significance.

To explain exactly what was the origin of water-colour painting, it would be necessary to go at some length into the history of technical processes. In a sense, water-colour is the oldest of all forms of painting; for in fresco, tempera, and the other devices which were used by the ancient decorators, water was the chief vehicle, as it was in the illuminations produced so extensively in the middle ages. There were water-colourists among the seventeenth-century Dutch and Flemish artists, and from the time of Holbein onwards there was in England a considerable school of miniaturists. But, despite the antiquity of the craft, it is still possible to describe English water-colour of the type which was specially fostered by the Society as a comparatively new creation. It was not at all like the tempera work of the Egyptians or the Greeks, it had few affinities with the art of the earlier miniatures; really it was a thing apart, with peculiar possibilities and particular characteristics, and its first beginnings do not date much further back than the middle of the eighteenth century.

For some fifty years previously there had been in this country considerable activity in the production of topographical illustrations —literal representations of places and buildings which were set down without any intention save to realise in a matter-of-fact manner the bare facts of the subject selected. Most of these illustrations were executed by engravers who attempted to give to their work no pictorial graces, and satisfied themselves with a purely formal statement of obvious things. Yet, crude, stiff, and unimaginative as these engravings were, they showed the way to a much less mechanical type of work. As a guide to the engraver it was necessary to prepare drawings in which the details of the subjects chosen would be presented with a due amount of accuracy, and the demand for these drawings had called into existence a school of draughtsmen, many of whom were in their particular direction men of undeniable ability. In the precise fashion of the period they did excellent work, and though they strictly respected conventions which to-day seem absurdly limited, they were not unsuccessful in their treatment of the material with which they had to deal.

There was in this topographical drawing practically no attention given to varieties of atmospheric effect or subtleties of tone. The subjects were presented in conventional light and shade, after the manner of an architectural design, and without any attempt to dwell upon accessories which would have increased the picturesqueness of

the final result. Certain set rules were observed, rules which governed the practice of all the draughtsmen, and prevented them from attaining any individualities of expression. The one prevailing idea was to be minutely explanatory, to leave out nothing which seemed to be necessary to convey to other people a full impression of every detail of the subject. Anything like generalisation or subordination of accessories to an artistic scheme was contrary to the customary practice, a refinement which was neither understood nor desired.

However, in this mechanical work there was the germ of better things, and all that was required to develop it was an artist with courage enough to show a definite degree of personal preference. Some hint of a coming change was given by the drawings of men like John Joshua Kirby, William Taverner, an amateur who executed views with reasonable regard for pictorial quality, and Samuel Scott, a painter of seascapes and London bits. In their productions the use of colour washes to give greater completeness and more variety of effect was studied more carefully than it had been by any of their predecessors. It was, it must be admitted, merely tentative, a kind of feeling the way to fuller expression ; but, as far as it went, it was correct in intention, and proved that the possibility of advance in the application of the water-colour medium was beginning to be appreciated. At least the idea, by which the earlier draughtsmen had been governed, of employing washes merely to tint arbitrarily drawings executed in line, was ceasing to satisfy the few men who were not absolutely convinced by the convention in favour at the time. That these men foresaw the future of the art with which they were experimenting is scarcely probable ; at best they can only be said to have been restless under the restrictions laid upon them, and to have tried to enlarge their sphere of action.

The artist who was really the first to respond definitely to the new point of view was Paul Sandby. He has been generally claimed as the father of English water-colour ; and though he was not the originator of the movement which was destined even in his lifetime to assume remarkable proportions, he deserves this title because he began systematically to put into shape the growing protest against the fashion which had hitherto prevailed. The more or less vague experiments of others he reduced to a regular scheme of practice, and he worked consistently to improve the art he followed. As it happened he had special opportunities of influencing the men about him, and as an educator he played a part of real importance. Therefore his activity produced results which were far greater than could

have been expected when the conditions under which he had to work are taken into account. He was well fitted to guide the taste of his contemporaries, and as, unlike most reformers, he came exactly at the right moment, he had not to suffer the common fate of being either ignored or treated as an impracticable dreamer.

He was born at Nottingham in 1725, and with his brother Thomas, his senior by four years, he entered in 1741 the drawing school in connection with the map and survey office at the Tower of London. Success came very speedily to both brothers. Thomas was chosen in 1743 as draughtsman and private secretary to the Duke of Cumberland, and was present at the battle of Culloden, of which he executed drawings that are still preserved in the Royal collection. In 1746 he was appointed Deputy Ranger of Windsor Great Park, and this post he retained for fifty-two years, till his death in 1798. He was one of the foundation members of the Royal Academy and its first Professor of Architecture, and as an architect he attained some measure of distinction. His drawings, many of which are to be found in various collections, prove that he was a most accomplished draughtsman, and that his knowledge of executive processes was exceptionally well cultivated. Had he not chosen architecture as his profession he might, it seems, have been eminent as a painter.

Paul Sandby, however, can be judged from a different standpoint. He was truly an artist, and his purpose was to clothe the dry facts of nature with some degree of poetic suggestion. At first his occupation was strictly that of a topographer, for he began his career in 1746 with a five years' engagement as a draughtsman in the survey of the Highlands, the sort of work which, as can be well imagined, offered him but little scope for the exercise of his pictorial ambition. But as years went on he widened considerably the area of his practice. Topography remained undoubtedly the primary motive for much of his production ; but he had the good sense to realise that even in the most veracious records of buildings and places there was room for the display of artistic individuality, and that drawings which began by being mere diagrams could be amplified into pictures by attention to subtleties of light and shade and refinements of aerial effect.

Out of this perception grew also a belief that he would find increased opportunities if he did not limit himself so closely to only one class of subject. He saw that there was more room for the exercise of his faculty of observation and imagination in motives which did not demand such strict topographic accuracy ; so he was tempted more and more, as time went on, to seek for material that

he could vary and adapt as his fancy dictated. In this way were developed his love of pure landscape, and that ingenuity in avoiding commonplace methods which is so agreeably manifested even in his illustrative drawings. Moreover, he was enlightened enough to depart frequently and markedly from the classic tradition which then had a very strong hold over the men who painted oil landscapes, from that imitation of Claude and his school which is so apparent in the eighteenth-century English pictures. Although in his imaginative compositions he was mainly a classicist, he digressed so often into easy and intelligent naturalism that there is no question about his right to a place among the men who could receive inspiration directly from nature, and could retain in a transcription of an actual scene the true sentiment of the subject.

What was the extent of his influence over others can be judged from the position he held during a great part of his long life—he died in 1809—as a teacher and producing artist. He was a prominent figure in social and artistic circles, a friend of the King, and intimately acquainted with people of all ranks. His personality was attractive, and in consequence he was welcomed as a companion by several influential patrons who could do much to popularise his artistic theories. Moreover, he held for some while the post of Chief Drawing Master in the Royal Military Academy at Woolwich, to which he was appointed in 1769, a post which gave him special opportunities of improving the taste of the rising generation. It was this exceptional combination of memorable capacities and of chances for making them effective that secured for him so distinguished a place in our art history, and that justifies his title as the founder of English water-colour.

In his progressive advance in understanding of nature and in technical facility, Sandby may be said to have summed up the course of development followed by the water-colour school as a whole. The men before him were topographers pure and simple; to them succeeded a number of intelligent experimentalists, who were honestly seeking to escape from conventions which they felt to be cramping and inelastic; and then came finally the sincere nature lovers, who recorded vividly and with originality their personal impressions of what they saw. Within a comparatively brief period water-colour painting — and especially water-colour landscape— passed from a merely formal process, capable of very narrow application, into an art full of vitality and restricted only by the necessary limitations of the medium. These limitations were soon found to be much less definite than the earlier painters had imagined; and the

later men, who could profit by the experience of their predecessors, carried the art to remarkable perfection. Indeed, it became in their hands one of the most subtly significant of all the available means of expression, and it took then a pre-eminent position, which it has retained to the present day.

There are in the long list of water-colour painters who were active during the lifetime of Paul Sandby many names well worthy to be remembered. Before his death in 1809 the greatest masters of the art whom this country has produced, De Wint, David Cox, Copley Fielding, J. S. Cotman, and Turner, had been born, and were beginning to range themselves among the most brilliant members of the school. But from the middle of the eighteenth century onwards a succession of skilful workers came forward to demonstrate the vitality of the new movement, and to interpret in their own way the principles which Sandby had laid down. Some of these men, like Alexander Cozens, and his son John Robert Cozens, A. W. Devis, Thomas Hearne, John and Robert Cleveley, Michael Angelo Rooker, Nicholas Pocock, William Pars, William Payne, the two Maltons, John Smith, and Edwin Dayes, several of whom had been actually taught by Sandby, aimed simply at the improvement of the existing method of tinting drawings. They were, according to modern ideas, essentially draughtsmen, and for the most part illustrative draughtsmen whose "views" were intended for reproduction by means of engraving. They claim attention principally because they carried topographic drawing to its highest perfection, and by practically exhausting its possibilities cleared the way for the pictorial departures of the greater craftsmen who were then rising into prominence.

These greater craftsmen made their influence strongly felt at the beginning of the nineteenth century, and then began decisively the final and effective change in the practice of water-colour. Many of the topographers, it is true, lived and worked for some years after the new condition of affairs was definitely established—for instance, Hearne did not die till 1817, and John Smith not till 1831—but their authority was rapidly diminishing, and as they disappeared one by one, none of the new comers showed the least inclination to revive the fading tradition. The new men had consciously or unconsciously committed themselves to an æsthetic policy which was in obvious opposition to that followed by their predecessors, and the whole course of their professional procedure was in its way a protest against the methods and mannerisms of the old school. Fortunately for them they were able to command the attention of the public, and to secure from people of sound judgment such a

considerable measure of support that they were encouraged to put forth their fullest energies; and when once the brief transition period was passed, while the old school and the new were striving side by side, they had no cause to complain that their efforts were misunderstood or not appreciated.

If Paul Sandby can be considered to have shown the way for the new development, the credit of proving its greatest possibilities may fairly be given to Thomas Girtin. This young artist, who was born in 1775 and died in 1802, was extraordinarily gifted, and had naturally an artistic endowment that was almost perfect in its balance. He was one of those men who have occurred occasionally in the history of art, to whom the practical details of their work presented apparently no difficulties, an instinctive master capable of attacking and overcoming triumphantly the most exacting problems. That he was ultimately surpassed by his contemporary and fellow student, Turner, can be frankly admitted, but this fact does not detract from his importance, and certainly does not diminish the significance of his intervention. It must be remembered that Girtin was only twenty-seven when he died, and the opportunity was therefore denied to him of establishing his position among English artists by a long and brilliant career such as Turner enjoyed.

Indeed, the astonishing quickness with which Girtin matured is one of the most interesting features of his too brief life. At an age when most men are only beginning—when Turner, for instance, was still but a student—he was an accomplished and influential artist, and was fully able to demonstrate the completeness of his understanding of the new methods of artistic expression which he advocated. He had an unerring perception of what was essential in pictorial arrangement, a singularly correct idea of combining harmoniously the various parts of a picture, and of investing them with the right degree of poetic sentiment; and as he was a sound and facile draughtsman and a sensitive colourist, he was able to set down his compositions with most persuasive conviction. Few men have been better fitted to direct the course of an evolution of artistic taste, because few have possessed so completely the combination of intelligence and manual skill which is necessary for leadership in the artist's profession.

The great difference between his manner of working and that of the other water-colour painters of his time was that he did not occupy himself with drawings in which colour and atmospheric effect were made subsidiary to a formal and conventional design, but chose rather to produce paintings that were in their colour qualities and

in their adjustment of tone relations as carefully studied as the canvases of the oil painters. He abandoned the previous system of setting down an arbitrary scheme of light and shade, which was afterwards amplified in an apologetic fashion by thin washes of colour. Instead he stated his subjects in all their varieties of local hue, and recorded properly the changes in these hues caused by shadows and half-tones. In fact, he substituted vigorous naturalism for half-hearted conventionality, and looked at nature not as an arrangement in black and white which might be tinted according to certain set rules, but rather as a mass of colour which should be made vivacious and sparkling by properly related light and shade.

This undoubtedly justifies the claim on his behalf that he was the first of all the earlier water-colourists to prove that this particular form of art was capable of independent and active existence. After he had shown the way forward there was no turning back; and, until quite within recent years, when a few pedants have foolishly tried to imitate the imperfections of the primitive tinted drawings, the mannerisms of the old school have been properly disregarded. Girtin set a fashion which, unlike most fashions, was based upon reason and good taste, and he did it so brilliantly and with such masterly confidence that he converted the whole of the rising generation of artists to his views. His success is the more memorable because the bulk of his work was executed for purposes of reproduction by engraving, and was therefore in all probability subject to some limitations. But these limitations did not prevent him from giving even to his illustrative drawings the fullest measure of spontaneity and naturalistic charm, and did not hamper the assertion of his delightful individuality; they only narrowed his choice of subject and caused him to occupy himself a little too frequently with architectural motives. In qualities of handling his drawings for reproduction suffer hardly at all by comparison with his pure landscapes, with those studies of wide distances and stretches of moorland which he treated with a largeness of style and a delicacy of atmospheric quality such as no English painter before him had attained.

It is possible that the influence of Girtin upon the men about him might have been less immediate if there had been no opportunities afforded to the younger painters to meet and exchange ideas about their intentions and achievements. Facilities for the systematic study of water-colour painting as an art were comparatively scarce. It is true that many of the better-known painters took pupils, as Sandby did, and so were able to train with some degree of efficiency

the students who were seeking a knowledge of the craft. But the art school as we have it to-day was quite in its infancy ; such classes as existed were on a small scale, and though the Royal Academy had been founded some few years before the end of the eighteenth century, its authority as an educational institution was not yet fully established. That the chances offered by its schools were beginning to be recognised by would-be artists is perhaps as much as can be safely said. In this position of affairs considerable importance can be attached to the services done to art by an amateur and art lover, one Dr. Monro, who took the keenest possible interest in the efforts of the young water-colourists. He was a man of exceptionally cultivated taste, a collector of much discrimination, and the possessor of a great number of fine pictures and drawings. Moreover, he had unusual skill as a draughtsman, and his sketches in the manner of Gainsborough, for whom he had a special admiration, were remarkable for their good qualities, and have often been declared to be little inferior to those of the master on whom he based his practice. The promise of the water-colour school appealed strongly to him, for he clearly foresaw what was likely to be the nature of its development, and he showed a very real anxiety to encourage it, and to do what was in his power to set it in the right direction.

His manner of encouragement was characteristically genial and thoughtful. It took a pleasantly personal form, and its aim was to promote association between the artists themselves, as well as to give them facilities for carrying on their work under agreeable conditions. The doctor's house was thrown open to the men of the new school, and his art treasures were put freely at their disposal as materials for study and subjects for copying. In addition he invited them to meet there on winter evenings in a kind of sketching class, at which they executed drawings which he purchased at the rate of half a crown each ; and the gatherings ended in a supper when work was over. He himself supervised the class, and gave hints which from a connoisseur of his taste and experience must have been of real value to men in need of guidance at the outset of their careers. Besides, as the sketchers were of all types, from the actual beginner to the artist of recognised proficiency, the contact of minds and the comparison of methods in such an assembly had mutual advantages which are sufficiently obvious.

Both Girtin and Turner, who had been friends from early boyhood, were among Dr. Monro's *protégés*, and at his house they met many others of the painters who were destined to make the history of the water-colour school. In such a group of young craftsmen, full of

enthusiasm for a new movement, it can well be imagined that Girtin with his brilliant capacities and zealous originality must have been a prominent figure, and must have affected most persuasively many of his associates. He had, moreover, a disposition which was altogether free from jealousy, and he was always ready to explain his methods and to expound his views to any one who wished for information. The careless, genial artistic temperament was strong in him, the temperament which makes a man popular with his fellows, though usually it somewhat hampers its possessor in his dealings with the commercial side of his profession. The effect of Girtin's geniality did not cease when his attendances at Dr. Monro's class came to an end. For the few years that he lived as an independent artist his studio was always open to his artist friends, and his knowledge was as freely imparted to them as it had been in his student days. That with a disposition so attractive he should have combined remarkable understanding of æsthetic questions and a degree of skill in craftsmanship which for the time at which he lived was extraordinary, may be accounted a most fortunate circumstance. It caused the influence he exerted over a host of followers to be wholly beneficial, and it started practically the whole of the new school upon a sound and sensible course.

When the eighteenth century closed water-colour painting in England had passed well beyond the tentative stage into serious and purposeful accomplishment. Its resources had been markedly extended, and it had been proved to be worthy to rank as something much higher than a plaything for amateurs, or a subsidiary to the engraver's art. But it still had to make its proper appeal to the general public as one of the greater forms of artistic achievement. Hitherto it had been patronised, intelligently enough without doubt, by only a few collectors and connoisseurs of the better sort, but by the great mass of art lovers it was little known. The reason for this can be found in the fact that there were so far few facilities for exhibiting drawings under suitable conditions. Moreover, nothing had been done to widen the market for water-colours, or to assert with sufficient conviction their importance as manifestations of a new æsthetic spirit. Indeed, the attitude of the existing artistic associations towards this form of practice was at best one of somewhat contemptuous toleration. To the exhibitions of the Society of Artists, the Free Society, and the Royal Academy, drawings were admitted, but they were not treated with any great favour, and were exposed in the galleries to a competition with oil paintings which was plainly to their disadvantage. The Academy had actually a law excluding from

membership artists who worked in water-colours only, which was naturally resented by these artists as a slight on them and their profession, and as a badge of inferiority that was calculated to affect harmfully the public judgment. Most of all was there complaint about the manner in which water-colours were hung in the Academy exhibitions, in dark corners and on walls unsuitably lighted, with the result that they could not be seen even by the people who wished to examine them. It was partly as a protest against this unfairness, partly with the idea of helping on the new school by providing it with a kind of central organisation, that certain painters set to work at the very outset of the nineteenth century to establish an exhibition of water-colour drawings only, and to give the art a reasonable chance of proving what strong claims it had to wide appreciation.

Against this, the generally assigned reason for the promotion of a scheme for a water-colour exhibition, it is only fair to quote a passage from the biography of Robson, written by Thomas Uwins, the Royal Academician. "The writer is old enough," he says," to recollect the time when the council room of the Royal Academy was devoted to the exhibition of paintings in water-colours. Here were to be seen the rich and masterly sketches of Hamilton, the fascinating compositions of Westall, the beautiful landscapes of Girtin, Callcott, and Reinagle, and the splendid creations of Turner —the mightiest enchanter who has ever wielded the magic power of art in any age or country. At this time the council room, instead of being what the present arrangement makes it, a place of retirement from the bustle of other departments, was itself the great point of attraction. Here crowds first collected, and here they lingered longest, because it was here the imagination was addressed through the means of an art which added the charm of novelty to excellence. It was the fascination of this room that first led to the idea of forming an exhibition entirely of pictures in water-colours."

It is to be feared that this enthusiastic account of the interest excited by the drawings which found their way into the earlier exhibitions of the Academy is not supported by contemporary evidence. It has certainly been strenuously contradicted by art historians, and it reads, it must be confessed, like a piece of special pleading. However, it is unnecessary to examine too closely the reasons that induced certain water-colourists to band themselves together to form an independent organisation for the advancement of their particular interests. That they did so is all that need be recorded: they may have been actuated by resentment at their

treatment by the oil painters; they may have thought, as Uwins suggests, that an art which could hold its own so successfully among the many counter-attractions in the rooms of the Academy would be even more prosperous when given chances of fuller expansion; or they may simply have wished to unite somewhat scattered forces into close and helpful association. To-day we are concerned with the results of their activity and little enough with the causes by which it was inspired.

The first step in the direction of organisation was taken in the first or second year of the nineteenth century by William Frederick Wells, an artist of moderate ability, who was an intimate friend of Turner and a teacher of much repute. He devoted himself assiduously to the advancement of his project, and tried to secure the co-operation of all the better known water-colour painters by sending to them a printed circular letter in which the advantages of forming a Society which would hold exhibitions of their work were eloquently set forth. His efforts were seconded by the miniaturist, Samuel Shelley, who had, it is said, been engaged upon a similar scheme before he became acquainted with Wells through the introduction of a mutual friend; and Shelley brought two other artists—Robert Hills, the painter of animals and rustic subjects, and William Henry Pyne, the landscape painter—to join in the discussion. Pyne was a man who took an enthusiastic interest in new schemes and was always ready to assist energetically any movement which promised good results, so that he was a valuable recruit.

These four men set to work to prepare a programme, and agreed upon a series of regulations which seemed to be suited to the purposes of such a society as they had in view. Their next step was to choose from among the painters available a number sufficient to enable the Association to commence operations with some hope of success. This, however, required deliberation, for obviously men of standing were required, and not all of those who would have done honour to the Society were available. Girtin had died while the scheme was in process of incubation, and so had also both the Maltons, Rooker, and Wheatley, while J. R. Cozens and Thomas Sandby had passed away some few years before. Turner was not eligible because he was a member of the Royal Academy, and Paul Sandby because he was nearly eighty years old. But finally six painters of repute were induced to join, and on November 30, 1804, the ten members, Wells, Shelley, Hills, Pyne, Francis Nicholson, Nicholas Pocock, John Varley and his younger brother Cornelius, John Claude Nattes, and William Sawrey Gilpin, met at the

Stratford Coffee House in Oxford Street, and formally declared themselves to be the Society of Painters in Water Colours.

At this meeting they settled the details of the constitution of the Society, and passed rules to define the financial responsibilities and privileges of the members. They also elected Gilpin as president, Shelley as treasurer, and Hills as secretary, and appointed Pyne, Nicholson, Pocock, and Wells, to serve on the committee. It was decided that the president and the other office holders should be elected annually, and that all the members in rotation should serve on the committee, of which the secretary was to be an ex-officio member. Immediately after this inaugural meeting the names of six more artists were added to the roll, Joshua Cristall, William Havell, James Holworthy, John Glover, Stephen Francis Rigaud, and George Barret the younger, so that when the first exhibition was held the Society had a membership of sixteen.

The place chosen for this first exhibition was a large room at 20 Brook Street, and the opening day was April 22, 1805. All the members were represented; John Varley by forty-two works, Pyne and Shelley by twenty-eight each, Glover and Hills by twenty-three each, Wells by twenty-one, Gilpin by twenty, Pocock by seventeen, Nicholson by fourteen, Cornelius Varley and Havell by twelve each, Barret by eleven, Cristall by eight, Rigaud by six, and Nattes and Holworthy by five each, so that the collection was as varied and comprehensive as it was artistically important. The success of its appeal to the public was instantaneous; during the seven weeks that the show remained open nearly twelve thousand people paid for admission, and a considerable proportion of the two hundred and seventy-five drawings found purchasers. The result was that when the accounts came to be made up at the close of the exhibition the Society found itself in an excellent position. The receipts exceeded £577, and there remained, after all expenses had been paid, a surplus of more than £270, which was divided between the members, according to the rule laid down, in shares proportioned to the declared values of their contributions to the gallery.

Naturally such a satisfactory starting of the career of the Society was most encouraging to the group of artists whose efforts had brought the Association into existence. On the strength of it they decided at their annual meeting, on November 30, 1805, to extend their boundaries and to increase the scope of their operations. A new class of contributors, called "Fellow Exhibitors," was created, who were to be sixteen in number, and from whom members were to be chosen in the future. It was also agreed that the number of

members should be fixed at twenty-four, to which it should be raised by the election of two men annually. At this meeting the three office holders were re-appointed, and Pocock, John Varley, and Glover, were put on the committee. A month later, nine "Fellow Exhibitors"—the name was changed afterwards to "Associate Exhibitors"—were elected, John James Chalon, William Delamotte, Robert Freebairn, Paul Sandby Munn, Richard Ramsay Reinagle, John Smith, Francis Stevens, John Thurston, and a lady, Miss Anne Frances Byrne, who painted fruit and flowers.

The second exhibition was held in the room in Brook Street. A month before it opened Gilpin resigned the presidentship of the Society, and was succeeded by Wells; he retained his membership, however, and continued to exhibit. Three hundred and one drawings were included in it, and the total proceeds amounted to a little over £760, out of which £440 was available for division among the members. Reinagle and John Smith were advanced to full membership in December 1806, and in the following spring Thomas Heaphy, and Augustus Pugin were elected Associates. About the same time Reinagle was made treasurer in the place of Shelley, who had resigned that post.

For the third exhibition the rooms in Pall Mall which had been previously occupied by the Royal Academy were secured. It included three hundred and twenty-four drawings, and produced a profit of more than £470. Four days after it closed a meeting was called to investigate a charge which had been brought against Nattes, one of the original members, of exhibiting as his own work drawings by other persons. The charge was proved, and he was in consequence expelled. At the annual meeting in November 1807, Glover was elected President, and Chalon and Heaphy full members; and in January 1808 John Augustus Atkinson and William Turner were made Associates; and in the same month occurred the death of one of the first elected Associates, Robert Freebairn. The 1808 exhibition was held in some rooms at 16 Old Bond Street, and produced a profit exceeding £445. It was the last to which William Delamotte contributed, though he continued to exhibit in other galleries for nearly fifty years, and lived until 1863. In November 1808 Reinagle succeeded Glover in the Presidentship, in which position he continued until 1812; and Atkinson and Turner were promoted to full membership. Just before the end of this year Shelley died, at the age of fifty-eight; he had shown in the exhibitions of the Society sixty-three drawings altogether.

At this stage of the history of the Society of Painters in Water-

Colours it will be as well to make a digression for the sake of explaining the position of a rival Association which has frequently been confused with it. This rival Association was started by a group of artists in June 1807; it bore at first the same title as the older Society, but changed this first to "The New Society of Painters in Miniature and Water-Colours," and finally, in 1808, to "The Associated Artists in Water-Colours." It opened its first exhibition on April 25, 1808, at the same rooms in Brook Street which had seen the inauguration of the activity of its predecessor, and it moved afterwards to 16 Old Bond Street, so that there is some excuse for the failure of historians to distinguish between the two Associations. Moreover, many men who afterwards became members of the old Society were first on the roll of the Associated Artists. It lived, however, only till 1812, when the contents of the gallery in which its last exhibition was held were seized by the landlord and sold to pay the rent.

Meanwhile, however, it had done by its competition an appreciable amount of harm to the original Society, which had in 1809 taken a lease of the well-known galleries in Spring Gardens. The first exhibition in these new rooms was attended by nearly twenty-three thousand visitors, and produced a surplus of £626; but in 1810 the attendance was only just over twenty thousand, in 1811 a little over nineteen thousand, and in 1812 it did not reach ten thousand seven hundred, with, of course, a corresponding diminution in the surplus available for distribution. During these years several changes were made in the list of contributors. In 1809 Thomas Uwins, William Payne, Edmund Dorrell, and Charles Wild were elected Associates; in 1810 Frederick Nash, Peter De Wint, Anthony Vandyke Copley Fielding, William Westall, and William Scott; and in 1812 David Cox, Luke Clennell, and C. Barber. The promotions to full membership were Stevens and Dorrell in 1809, Uwins and Nash in 1810, De Wint and Westall in 1811, and Wild and Pugin in 1812.

In this last year the affairs of the Society had, as the members recognised, come to a crisis which called for immediate action. So a meeting was called to discuss what was to be its future policy. Two suggestions were made, one that the scope of the Association should be extended in such a manner as to ensure its receiving the support of the whole body of water-colour painters; the other, that the members and Associates should be allowed to contribute to its exhibitions oil pictures as well as drawings. The second of these suggestions was adopted, and was confirmed at a subsequent meeting;

but at a third meeting a few days later it was rescinded, and a resolution to wind up the Society was passed instead. In the interval Chalon, Dorrell, and Stevens, and Reinagle, the President, had resigned. On November 30, the anniversary of the founding eight years before, the members met for the last time, and resolved "that the Society, having found it impracticable to form another Exhibition of Water-Colour Paintings only, do consider itself dissolved this night."

But even before this anniversary meeting had taken place a section of the members had agreed to carry on the work of the Society, with some definite modifications of the policy which had been hitherto followed. The discussion took place at the house of John Varley; and there were present Barret, Cristall, Copley Fielding, Havell, James Holmes, Holworthy, John and Cornelius Varley, John Linnell, Smith, and Uwins, with Nicholson in the chair. They decided to form "a Society for the purpose of establishing an exhibition consisting of pictures in oil and water-colours;" it was to be limited to twenty members, but a certain number of other artists were to be invited to contribute to the exhibitions. After the formal dissolution of the original Society another meeting of the promoters of this new association was called; a list of members was drawn up, including Barret, Cristall, Cox, Copley Fielding, Glover, Miss Harriet Gouldsmith, Havell, Holmes, Holworthy, Linnell, Nicholson, Smith, Turner, Uwins, John and Cornelius Varley; Nicholson was elected President, Smith Secretary, and Barret Treasurer; and a little later Frederick Mackenzie and Henry Richter were added to the members' list. Several other artists from the old Society consented to contribute—among them Nash, Atkinson, Clennell, C. Barber, Scott, De Wint, Pugin, Wild, Dorrell, Stevens and Miss Byrne.

The new Society took care to conceal as far as possible that there had been any change in the position of affairs. It called itself the Society of Painters in Oil and Water-Colours, it took over the lease of the gallery in Spring Gardens, and it numbered its first exhibition in 1813 as the ninth; and it inserted in the catalogue of this show a note to the effect that "The Society of Painters in Water-Colours, stimulated by Public Encouragement, and gaining Confidence from Success, have ventured this year on a considerable extension of their Plan. Pictures in Oil and in Water-Colours, Portraits, Models, and Miniatures are admitted into the present exhibition; and should these increased efforts receive from the Public that liberal support which has always accompanied the former exertions of this Society, every Year may produce fresh sources of Amusement, and each

succeeding exhibition become more worthy of Approbation and Patronage." In all other respects this catalogue was got up in exactly the same manner as those of the previous exhibitions.

For seven years, from 1813 to 1820, the Society continued on these lines, and on the whole with a fair measure of success. In 1813, 1814, and 1815 there was a small surplus, but in 1816 the members had to face a deficit of nearly £74. This falling off in the receipts was disconcerting, but it had the good effect of inducing a reconsideration of the position of the Society, and it led in the following year, when there was again a surplus, to the creation of a reserve fund. It was agreed, moreover, that for the future the profits should belong to the members in equal shares, instead of being divided between them in proportions according to the estimated value of their contributions to the exhibitions. In 1818 there was again a surplus of more than £100, followed by a small deficit in 1819 and 1820; but, thanks to the existence of the reserve, these fluctuations had ceased to be a source of anxiety. Indeed, so satisfied was the Society with its position that it decided to institute three premiums of £30 each, which were to be awarded to members as an inducement to attempt ambitious works which would increase the attractiveness of the exhibitions. Barret, Cristall, and Cornelius Varley were the first recipients of these awards.

The policy of holding shows of mixed oil paintings and water-colour drawings had now had a full trial, and had been proved by results to be more or less mistaken. It had certainly brought to the Society no accession of prosperity; it had, indeed, tended rather to diminish its popularity and to weaken its position. So on June 5, 1820, a meeting was called to decide what was to be the next move, and after a long and serious debate a resolution was passed "That the Society shall henceforth be a Society of Painters in Water-Colours only, and that no Oil Paintings shall be exhibited with their works." This was ratified at a second meeting about a week later, and the original title of the Association was once more adopted. It was also decided that the exhibitions should no longer be held at the gallery in Spring Gardens, which for various reasons had become an undesirable head-quarters.

Accordingly, in April 1821, the "seventeenth annual exhibition" of the twice reconstructed Society was opened at the Egyptian Hall in Piccadilly, where a room had been hired temporarily. This change of quarters was made, to the public, the excuse for the alteration in the policy of the members, and there appeared in the catalogue a note stating that "The Lease of the Room at Spring Gardens, lately

occupied by the Society of Painters in Water Colours, having expired, and their new Exhibition Room being less spacious than the former, they have taken the opportunity to revert to the original plan on which the Society was established in 1804, by confining their exhibitions to Works executed by Members of the Society, and in Water-Colours only. This alteration, they have reason to hope, will be generally approved; and they trust their removal will not operate to diminish the patronage they have hitherto enjoyed, and which has enabled them to promote the improvement of their art, by distributing the profits of the Exhibition, as Premiums, for the encouragement of meritorious and elaborate Works." But the show excited only languid interest; it was visited by less than nine thousand people, and it produced a margin of only £44 after expenses were paid. In the following year things were even worse, for the attendance dropped to but little over seven thousand, and there was a deficit instead of a profit.

Evidently the Egyptian Hall was not likely to prove a suitable exhibition place, and clearly the Society had not yet found out how to secure from the public sufficient attention. So, to try and improve matters, the members decided to increase their numbers, and set seriously to work to find a larger gallery in which to establish themselves permanently. At last, in December 1822, they took on lease a new room which had just been built in Pall Mall East, and there the Society has remained to the present day. In the interval between the signing of the lease and the opening of the 1823 exhibition several additions were made to the list of members and Associates, so that the total number of contributors amounted to thirty-two. The members were George Barret, Miss Barret, Miss Byrne, David Cox, Cristall, Copley Fielding, Mrs. T. H. Fielding, J. D. Harding, Robert Hills, Frederick Mackenzie, Samuel Prout, Pugin, G. F. Robson, John Smith, Stephanoff, F. Stevens, Miss Scott, W. Turner, John Varley, and C. Wild; and the Associates, H. C. Allport, W. T. Bennett, R. H. Essex, F. O. Finch, H. Gastineau, S. Jackson, C. Moore, W. Nesfield, H. Richter, W. Scott, W. Walker, and J. Whichelo. Of these three, Smith, Stevens, and Allport, ceased to exhibit after 1823.

This new departure on the part of the Society was immediately justified by its results. Over eleven thousand people visited the 1823 exhibition, which produced a satisfactory surplus; and there was a definite increase in sales. In 1823 it was decided to allow the number of the Associates to be increased to sixteen; but, though this rule was passed, it was, for various reasons, not acted upon, and there

was for a while a falling off rather than an increase in the list of members of this class. In 1823 it stood at twelve, but in 1824, 1825, and 1826, it was respectively eleven, ten, and nine. It rose to twelve again in 1827, to fourteen in the following year, and to fifteen in 1829. There were eighteen full members and four lady members in 1823, and in 1829 the former numbered twenty-three, and the latter six. This progressive advance in the strength of the Association was not the only proof of its revival. The attendances at the exhibitions went on growing—there were well over fourteen thousand visitors in 1826—and the balance on the right side became an annual certainty, with the consequence that not only were the premiums increased in number, but the reserve fund was rapidly augmented, until in 1828 it stood at £700.

During the whole of this period Cristall remained President. He had held the post twice before—in 1816 and 1819; he was re-elected in 1821, and continued in office until his resignation in July 1831, when Copley Fielding was chosen to succeed him. A special note must be made of the fact that in 1825 De Wint returned as a member of the Society. He had resigned in 1812, and had been asked to come back when the change of constitution was made in 1821, but he delayed his acceptance of this invitation for four years. The year before De Wint returned William Henry Hunt was elected an Associate, and in 1826 he was promoted to full membership, so that at this date there were together on the roll of the Society four of the greatest masters whose names are recorded in the history of English water-colour—David Cox, De Wint, W. Hunt, and Copley Fielding. It would be impossible to question the authority of an organisation which, among many other artists of eminence, could count as supporters four men of such supreme ability.

The Presidency of Copley Fielding continued till his death on March 13, 1855. For the whole of this twenty-four years the Society enjoyed unbroken prosperity, and did not cease to attract to its ranks artists of distinguished capacity. It could not complain that it was insufficiently appreciated by the public, for the number of visitors to its exhibitions averaged, during the period between 1831 and 1843, over nineteen thousand, and its position as the leading institution for the encouragement of water-colour painting was fully recognised both in England and abroad. Its funds were steadily growing, and its finances had arrived at such a satisfactory condition that it was able to expend some £240 a year in premiums, as well as to vote sums of money for the assistance of the families of deceased members and as contributions to various charities. This fortunate

state of affairs was the result of wise management and of careful husbanding of the profits which accrued from the annual exhibitions. The Society, indeed, had learned thoroughly the lesson which had been taught by its experience in past years, and realised the importance of providing against possible losses.

In 1855, soon after Copley Fielding died, a group of English water-colours was exhibited in the Universal Exhibition at Paris, and there attracted the enthusiastic admiration of French critics and connoisseurs. Of the two first-class gold medals awarded to English artists one was allotted to George Cattermole, a member of the Society whose drawings were the most generally approved of the whole group. Frederick Tayler, another member, served on the jury of the Exhibition in the place of Fielding. At the annual meeting in November 1855, John Frederick Lewis was elected President. but he held office only until February 1858, when he resigned his membership of the Society because he wished to give his time to oil painting. Certain important events occurred during his Presidency; the chief of them was the decision, arrived at in 1857, to abandon the custom of giving premiums. Some £5000 altogether had been expended in premiums, and the members now felt that they would be acting more wisely if for the future they exercised a stricter economy, and used all possible means to increase their reserve. The question of enlarging their gallery was then under discussion, so it was necessary to provide a sum sufficient to meet what were likely to be serious expenses.

This matter remained in abeyance, however, for some little while. It was actually settled while Frederick Tayler, who had succeeded Lewis in 1858, was President, and after an attempt had been made to secure from the Government part of the site of Burlington House for the erection of a new gallery. This application was refused, and as an alternative the Society decided to buy the ground lease of its premises in Pall Mall East, with some of the adjoining properties. and to reconstruct its rooms on a larger scale. By February 1862, this rebuilding was completed at a cost of several thousand pounds, which was defrayed partly out of the reserve fund, and partly by the issue of debentures; and for the first time in its history, the Society found itself in an absolutely independent position.

Meanwhile a revision of its rules and constitutions had been in progress, under the supervision of its legal adviser, Mr. Field. This revision was finally passed at a meeting in February 1861; among other changes it formally defined the status of the lady members and included them among the Associates, and it imposed upon each new

member the obligation to present to the Society an example of his work. This last rule was unfortunately not made retrospective, but the members already on the roll were invited to give drawings, and so to make reasonably representative what was intended to be a diploma gallery. In 1862, with the intention of utilising as far as possible the advantages of the new gallery, a second annual show was commenced, a Winter Exhibition of Sketches and Studies, in which it was proposed to include slighter and more spontaneous works than were admissible to the Spring Exhibition. This scheme was advocated by John Gilbert, who had joined the Society as an Associate in 1852, and had become a full member two years later; it was preferred to an alternative scheme, suggested by J. D. Harding, that classes for the teaching of water-colour painting should be established in the gallery. During Tayler's tenure of the office of President a small increase in the number of members and Associates took place. There had been twenty-six of the former and twenty-two of the latter in 1855, but in 1870, when Tayler resigned, they had risen to thirty and twenty-eight respectively.

John Gilbert was chosen as President in succession to Frederick Tayler, and in 1872 received the honour of knighthood; he held office for twenty-six years, until his death in 1897. In 1872 he was also elected an Associate of the Royal Academy, an event which marked decisively the abandonment of the old rule, to which the Academy had long adhered, under which members of other art societies were incapable of becoming Associates or Academicians. This rule had been previously broken in 1870, when W. C. T. Dobson, A.R.A., was elected an Associate of the Water-Colour Society, and again in 1871, when Frederick Walker, who had been a member of the Society since 1866, was made an A.R.A. Since that time many distinguished artists have belonged to both institutions. In 1873 a new order of honorary members was created; it was intended to include people, whether artists or not, whose services to art seemed to deserve recognition. The first of these honorary members were the Right Hon. W. E. Gladstone, Sir Richard Wallace, Sir Prescott Hewett, Jean Baptiste Madou, President of the Royal Belgian Society of Painters in Water-Colour, and John Ruskin.

Nearly ten years after Sir John Gilbert became President, the Society was honoured by permission to call itself "The Royal Society of Painters in Water-Colours," and the members were given diplomas signed by the Sovereign. This change came into operation on July 20, 1881. In the previous year the number of

members had been again increased, and the limit had been fixed at forty ; an addition was also made to the list of Associates, who in 1883 numbered as many as forty-five. In April 1881 the Society was approached by the Institute of Painters in Water-Colours with suggestions for the amalgamation of the two Associations—the Institute had been founded in 1831 as "The New Society of Painters in Water-Colours," and had changed its name in 1863. These suggestions, made by the Institute in a most reasonable spirit, and discussed thoughtfully and carefully by the Society, were ultimately disposed of in April 1882, when the President wrote officially to say that "the members of this Society, while recognising and acknowledging the friendly feeling shown in the proposal of the Institute, which they very sincerely reciprocate, regret that after mature consideration they have been led to the conclusion that the fusion or amalgamation of the two Societies presents difficulties of various kinds which they find to be insurmountable, and that consequently they are unable further to entertain the proposition which the Institute has done them the honour to make." This refusal was apparently based on the conviction that the amalgamation would be of no benefit to the Society itself, and would have only the effect of involving it in greatly increased responsibilities, without in any corresponding degree improving its financial prospects. Wisely the members of the Society resolved to adhere to their traditional policy, and not to launch out into a speculation the results of which were indefinite and practically impossible to forecast.

For some little while before his death Sir John Gilbert's infirmities prevented his actively fulfilling the duties of President, so Professor Hubert von Herkomer acted as his deputy. When Sir John died the vacancy was filled by the election of Mr. Ernest Albert Waterlow, who had been made an Associate in 1880 and a full member in 1894 ; he was knighted soon afterwards. There was a decided appropriateness in his selection as the head of the Society, for as a distinguished landscape painter he represented a class of art practice which had always been admirably illustrated in the exhibitions. At the time he was an Associate of the Royal Academy, and he has since been advanced to the rank of Academician, so that the Society is for the second time presided over by a member of the Academy. Under his direction the prosperity of the institution shows no sign of diminution ; the annual exhibitions still attract a host of visitors, and the record of sales year by year proves how thoroughly acceptable to art lovers of all types are the efforts of the contributors.

Indeed, the position of the Society after a century of existence shows

with what consistent judgment its best traditions have been maintained, and how skilfully it has been steered through the risks and vicissitudes to which it has been exposed. That it has had its full share of adventures cannot be denied, but it has always been ready to learn by experience and to turn to good account whatever opportunities of improving its position have presented themselves. One of the chief sources of its artistic success, and of its financial prosperity as well, has been its readiness to add to its roll those artists who can fairly be called leaders in thought and practice. Unlike many other art institutions it has never become stereotyped, and has never hesitated to associate in its gallery the most varied kinds of accomplishment. An astonishing array of great water-colourists has been gathered under its banner, and its record provides in consequence an almost complete history of the progress of water-colour painting in this country. To-day it can with justice claim to be the most comprehensive and the most broad-minded of all the Societies with its particular purpose, for there is scarcely any phase of æsthetic conviction that cannot be adequately studied in its exhibitions.

THE MEMBERS OF THE SOCIETY.

IT is certainly no exaggeration to say that the great majority of the men who have been chiefly instrumental in making the history of British water-colour painting have at one time or another been counted among the members of the Society. A capacity to recognise and profit by its opportunities has always been a characteristic of the Association, and it rarely missed the chance of securing the co-operation of those artists who were most likely to increase its influence and repute. A note has been already made of certain exceptions from the distinguished series of names inscribed upon the roll of members, exceptions which for a variety of reasons were inevitable. But these were not numerous enough to affect to any serious extent the development of the Society, or to reduce perceptibly the significance of the part it played in the art politics of the nineteenth century. Unquestionably it has done its best with the ample material at its disposal, and has used most judiciously all the available means of promoting its own interests and those of the art which it sought to establish on a secure foundation.

The most dangerous of the adverse influences against which the Society had to struggle during its earlier years was that of the Royal Academy ; this institution in those days looked with jealousy upon all artistic bodies which might be presumed to be in competition with it, and demanded undivided allegiance from the men whom it had chosen. Not only had it formulated a carefully enforced rule that members of other Associations were not eligible for election to the Associateship, but it had the other by which artists who worked in water-colours only were excluded from Academic honours. As a consequence a certain number of men whose services would have been of much value in advancing the activity of the Society, were prevented from giving their assistance, and had to show their sympathy with the art in other ways.

Quite the most important of these exceptions was Turner, the greatest water-colourist whom the world has ever known, and the one in whose practice all the phases and possibilities of this method of working were fully exemplified. He had been elected

an Associate of the Academy in 1799, and an Academician in 1802, so he was absolutely barred from taking any part in the scheme which resulted in the formation of the Water-Colour Society in 1804. Other men were on the same ground not available ; and even of those who actually joined the Society a certain number withdrew at one time or another because they had, or thought they had, a chance of admission to the older institution. All this naturally helped to weaken in some measure the strength of the appeal which the water-colourists were making for attention ; but fortunately there was too much vitality in the movement, and there were too many artists of ability ready to fill the gaps left by those who seceded, for the progress of the association to be perceptibly checked. It had from the beginning the sympathy of the public, and received on the whole an adequate amount of support ; while the internal dissensions, which might well have destroyed it if they had been dealt with in the wrong spirit, were actually helpful because they led to the making of intelligent experiments and to the multiplying of experiences which were of much value in settling details in the policy and management of the Society.

For its actual founders no extraordinary prominence among British artists can fairly be claimed. William Frederick Wells was a skilful topographer, who is chiefly known to fame as an intimate friend of Turner, and the one at whose instigation the "Liber Studiorum" was undertaken ; Samuel Shelley was a figure painter who had made a reputation by his miniatures, and was in some measure a rival of Cosway. The other two, Robert Hills and W. H. Pyne, who were brought in by Shelley to help in planning out the scheme, were of some standing in their profession, Hills as a painter of animals, and as an exquisite draughtsman in pencil, and Pyne as a painter of landscapes and of rustic groups with landscape backgrounds. But perhaps Pyne's claim to be remembered rests more upon his writings on art subjects, and his contributions to the artistic history of his times, than upon his actual pictorial achievements.

The six men, Nicholas Pocock, Francis Nicholson, John and Cornelius Varley, John Claude Nattes, and William Sawry Gilpin, who joined the other four before the first meeting was held to draw up formally the constitution of the Society, were all of acknowledged position. Pocock had been originally a sailor, but had adopted the artistic profession when he was about thirty, and was well known as a painter of landscapes, portraits, and especially marine subjects ; Nicholson was a skilful painter of landscapes and portraits, and a successful teacher ; Nattes, a topographic draughtsman who had been con-

cerned in the production of many books of views in the British Isles and abroad; and Gilpin, the son of a Royal Academician, was a drawing master with a very large practice. Of the two Varleys, John was the elder by three years; he was only twenty-six when the Society was constituted, but he had already gained a position of some distinction by the merit of his work in landscape, and had justified great anticipations as to his success in the near future—anticipations which before long were amply fulfilled. Art historians count him rightly enough among the chief of the earlier masters of water-colour, and estimate highly the value of his services. He was undoubtedly an important addition to the small group of enthusiasts who were so anxious to see the claims of their art presented to the public with due persuasiveness.

Of not less distinction were the recruits gained by the Society during the short interval which separated the inaugural meeting of the members on November 30, 1804, from the first exhibition early in 1805. The list of adherents was raised to sixteen by the addition of George Barret the younger, the son of the foundation member of the Royal Academy, and an artist with an exquisite sense of style and a very sound technical method; Joshua Cristall, a poetic painter who treated figure subjects and landscapes with dainty facility and with charming taste; James Holworthy, an able landscape painter; Stephen Francis Rigaud, who had gained the Academy gold medal for historical painting three years before; William Havell, a young man of twenty-three, who showed promise, afterwards well fulfilled, of becoming eminent in his profession; and John Glover, a self-taught artist, who had attained a good position as a teacher, and had become widely popular by his works in oil and water-colour. He filled the post of President of the Society for the year 1815, but he resigned his membership in 1818 because he had an ambition, which was, however, not realised, to become an Associate of the Royal Academy.

The nine artists who were elected at the end of 1805 as "Associate Exhibitors," the newly-constituted class from which members were to be chosen for the future, were Miss Anne Frances Byrne, the eldest daughter of the engraver, William Byrne, and a clever painter of fruit and flowers; John James Chalon, a landscape painter of unquestionable ability; William Delamotte, the drawing master at the Great Marlow Military Academy, who had been a pupil of Benjamin West but had subsequently made a reputation by his landscape drawings in Girtin's manner; Paul Sandby Munn, a man of moderate ability; Robert Freebairn, a pupil of Richard Wilson;

Francis Stevens, a capable and accomplished landscape painter; John Thurston, who had begun as a copper-plate engraver, but had acquired later a prominent position as an illustrative figure draughtsman and wood engraver; Richard Ramsay Reinagle, the son of a Royal Academician, and an artist of some note among the younger landscape painters of the time; and John Smith, the veteran water-colourist who had played an important part in the earlier development of the art, and had done much by his intelligent technical experiments to improve its processes. Reinagle and Chalon afterwards became Associates of the Academy, in 1814 and 1827 respectively.

During the succeeding period of six years which ended with the reconstitution of the Society in December 1812, sixteen Associate Exhibitors were elected. Among them were several men of the greatest distinction, to whom by general consent places of special prominence have been assigned among British masters. Thomas Heaphy and Augustus Pugin, chosen in March 1807, were both valuable acquisitions, the former as a figure painter of subjects from low life, and the latter as a very skilful architectural draughtsman; he was for some time an assistant to John Nash, the architect who designed Regent Street. In the following year were added two men of some note, John Augustus Atkinson, a painter of rustic and military subjects, and William Turner, better known as "Turner of Oxford," a young artist who had been apprenticed to John Varley and had acquired something of his master's largeness of manner and breadth of style; and in 1809 came Thomas Uwins, William Payne, Edmund Dorrell, and Charles Wild, the first of whom was then laying the foundation of the considerable reputation as a romantic figure painter which more than twenty years later gained him admission to the Academy. Payne and Dorrell were well known by their landscapes, and Wild by his architectural drawings, which had a more than ordinary degree of pictorial quality.

The year 1810 is notable in the history of the Society because it saw the addition of the names of De Wint and Copley Fielding to the list of Associate Exhibitors. In the same year Frederick Nash, a very able architectural draughtsman; William Westall, a landscape painter who, though not yet thirty, had had many adventures in various parts of the world; and William Scott, a student of English scenery, about whom little is now known, were also elected; but they cannot be reckoned to have done more than strengthen the rank and file of the Association, and one of them, Westall, retired within two years to become an Associate of the Academy. Copley

Fielding and De Wint, however, were not only life-long supporters of the Society, but also instrumental in no small degree in establishing its claim to be regarded as the chief centre of the British water-colour school. Both were craftsmen of superlative skill, and both studied and recorded nature with exquisite sensitiveness. Fielding was, perhaps, the greater of the two as a painter of atmospheric effects, but he scarcely equalled De Wint in breadth and expressiveness of brushwork and in masculine individuality of manner. They both had practically the same training, for they were much influenced by John Varley, who gave them many useful hints, though they were not actually his pupils, and they were both admitted to the class of young painters who met at the house of Dr. Monro. Fielding, however, unlike De Wint, who was the son of a physician, had the advantage of being brought up among artistic surroundings; his father was a successful painter, who allowed his four sons to follow the same profession.

Another famous name appears for the first time in 1812, when David Cox was elected with Luke Clennell and Charles Barber. Clennell, who had been trained by Bewick as a wood engraver, was a water-colourist of more than ordinary power, but his career ended by the failure of his mind when he was only thirty-six, and Barber's connection with the Society ceased shortly after his election; so that neither of them call for more than passing mention. But Cox continued to contribute largely to its exhibitions until his death forty-seven years later; during this long period his reputation steadily advanced, and his place at the very head of a school which had won its way to unquestioned eminence was at last universally acknowledged. He fully deserved the recognition which came to him in the later years of his laborious life; few men have striven so consistently and with such firmness of purpose to realise a worthy ambition, and few have combined so happily acuteness of observation and sympathetic understanding of nature with delightful mastery over executive details.

It can certainly be accounted a fortunate circumstance that of these three great artists Fielding and Cox, with others like Glover, Barret, Cristall, Nicholson, and the Varleys, should have remained faithful to the Society during the crisis which overtook it at the end of 1812. Nearly half the total number of members and associate exhibitors seceded then, some of them permanently, others like De Wint to return at a later date. But other artists who had not previously belonged to the association showed themselves not unwilling to attach themselves to the distinguished group by which its traditions were being upheld, and to help in carrying on a movement

which had been well begun. The first of these newcomers were John Linnell, subsequently a famous painter of romantic landscape, who was then barely twenty-one; James Holmes, who made a specialty of humorous rustics and miniature portraits; and Miss Harriet Gouldsmith, who treated landscape with some success; and before the 1813 exhibition opened, the names of Henry Richter, a painter of domestic subjects, and Frederick Mackenzie, an architectural draughtsman who chose chiefly church interiors as motives for his drawings, were enrolled. A few months later came the election of George Fennel Robson, a young artist of five and twenty, who was destined to achieve distinction by his landscape drawings, and especially by his romantic studies of mountain scenery; and in this year also there appears for the first time in the records of the Society the name of Henry C. Allport, a sufficiently capable painter, about whose career little, however, is known.

No other elections took place until 1819, when Samuel Prout and James Stephanoff were made members. Prout, who was then a man of thirty-six, had not yet turned to the particular type of work by which he afterwards became famous. He was, however, well known as a very skilful topographical draughtsman, and he had produced a large number of etched views, some from his own drawings and some from those of other artists. He had commenced contributing to the exhibitions of the Society in 1815, and began then a connection with it which continued uninterruptedly till his death nearly forty years later. Stephanoff, who was about five years younger than Prout, remained a member till 1861, when he resigned. He was not, perhaps, a painter of the highest rank, but he treated figure subjects, mostly taken from romantic fiction, plays, and poems, with undeniable vigour and much facility. He painted a few incidents, as well, from the life of his own times.

After the second reconstruction of the Society in 1820 there was an immediate increase in the number of artists who were admitted to membership. There were gaps in the ranks to fill because some men had signified by resignation their disapproval of the further change of policy decided upon by the majority; and there were additions necessary to bring the association up to a sufficient working strength to enable it to continue its activity without the assistance of outside contributors. The first of the new comers were William James Bennett, James Duffield Harding, and William Walker, who joined as Associates in June 1820. Bennett, a landscape painter of passable capacity, must not be confounded with the other William Bennett, who was a pupil of David Cox, and from 1848 onwards a member

of the Institute of Painters in Water-Colours. Walker was best known by his paintings of the scenery and architecture of Greece, in which country he travelled for some while; and Harding by his facile but conventional landscapes which he treated in accordance with a particular recipe that was more effective than intelligent. He was a popular and successful teacher, and published several books on the practice of art. In the following year were added a new member, Mrs. T. H. Fielding, a flower painter, who was the wife of Copley Fielding's elder brother; and a new Associate, Henry Gastineau, who was known both as a teacher and as a landscape draughtsman.

Still more numerous were the accessions during 1822 and 1823. In addition to certain former members who were reinstated two new lady members, Miss M. Barret and Miss Scott, were elected, and seven Associates, Charles Moore, Francis Oliver Finch, George Cattermole, William Andrews Nesfield, Richard Hamilton Essex, Samuel Jackson, and John Whichelo. Miss Barret, a daughter of the elder George Barret, the Royal Academician, painted still life subjects and made some reputation by her miniatures also; and Miss Scott devoted herself to flowers and fruit. The most important of the men was George Cattermole, then in his twenty-second year; he was at this stage of his career known only as an architectural draughtsman, and was busy with drawings intended to illustrate John Britton's great publication, "The Cathedral Antiquities of Great Britain." He was represented by one of these drawings in the 1822 exhibition of the Society, but he sent nothing more till 1829, when he was re-elected an Associate. By this latter date he had found his way into the romantic and historical class of subjects by which he became so widely known; and until his final resignation of his membership in 1852 he continued to be a prolific exhibitor of figure compositions of this kind. He was accounted by his contemporaries as one of the ablest of British water-colourists, and this opinion has been fully endorsed by later judgment.

Finch, a delicate and poetic landscape painter, who worked in the earlier water-colour manner, perhaps comes next to Cattermole in importance. He was a pupil of John Varley, but he followed rather the style of George Barret. Three others of the new Associates, Nesfield, Samuel Jackson, and Whichelo, contributed landscapes. Nesfield, who had been a lieutenant in the army before he adopted art as his profession, had a preference for mountainous scenery, and made waterfalls his specialty; Jackson, a pupil of F. Danby, painted with much ability picturesque bits in Wales

and the West of England; and Whichelo alternated between coast scenes and pure landscapes. He is supposed to have been a pupil of either Varley or Cristall, but there is comparatively little known about his early life. Moore and Essex were architectural draughtsmen of some standing; the former, like Cattermole, executed some of the illustrations for Britton's "Cathedral Antiquities," the latter did a certain amount of illustrative work, but made his chief successes with drawings of buildings like Magdalen College, Oxford, and Ely Cathedral.

The years 1824 and 1825 are both memorable, for the first saw the election of William Henry Hunt, and the second that of John Sell Cotman. With Hunt was admitted a second Associate, John Masey Wright, a man of forty-six, who had gained a considerable reputation by his compositions illustrating scenes from Shakespeare's plays, and from various romances. He was practically a self-taught artist; but in his youth he had known Stothard, and had been much influenced by him. Hunt was some twelve years younger, and was almost unknown to the general public. Up to the time when he joined the Society he had painted chiefly landscapes or architectural subjects; but he began then to exhibit those studies of rustic figures and still life to which he adhered for the rest of his long career. He was an admirably acute observer and a masterly executant, and by his consummate ability he gave a meaning and importance to his work far beyond what can ordinarily be claimed for such essays in what is necessarily more or less unimaginative realism. In some ways it is surprising that an artist so highly gifted should have been content to confine his practice within such narrow limits, but he was severely hampered throughout his life by ill-health, and it was scarcely possible for him to attempt anything which might have taxed his physical energies.

Cotman was a painter of much wider range; he produced landscapes, architectural subjects, and sea pieces, figure compositions, and portraits; he worked equally well in oil and water-colour, and he was a successful etcher. His drawings and paintings can be unreservedly praised for their largeness and distinction of style, and for their splendid technical qualities; he can be counted without hesitation among our greater masters. His understanding of the principles of pictorial arrangement was extremely judicious, few artists have known better how to adjust the composition of masses and details, or how to manage relations of light and shade. There is in all his work a dignified simplicity which resulted partly from the correctness of his vision, and partly from the straightforwardness

of his method—a sincere directness which is especially attractive. When he joined the Society he was a man of forty-two, and an artist of such standing that he was not required to submit works for approval previous to his election. Yet he never rose above the rank of Associate, though he continued to contribute to the exhibitions until 1839. During the greater part of his life he was much occupied in teaching, and in 1834 he was appointed drawing-master at King's College, when he left Norwich, where he was born and had spent the greater part of his life, and settled in London. There he died on July 24, 1842.

The most distinguished of the four Associates who were elected in 1827 was John Frederick Lewis; the others, men of comparative unimportance, were Samuel Austin, a painter of coast, harbour, and river scenes, and of rustic figures; George Pyne, an indifferent artist, who was the son of W. H. Pyne, the foundation member of the Society; and John Byrne, a brother of the lady member of the same name, and a graceful if scarcely a great landscape painter. Lewis was an artist of much higher capacities, and though he was only twenty-one at the time of his election, he had already attracted attention by the pictures which he had exhibited in other galleries. These pictures were mostly of animals or sporting subjects, but he soon changed his direction, and occupied himself for some years with figure drawings representing in succession life in Scotland, Italy, Spain, Greece, and Asia Minor: and finally, after a prolonged residence in Egypt, he turned to those Eastern subjects which brought him an immense reputation in his later life. In 1859, a year after he had ceased to be a member of the Society, he was made an Associate of the Royal Academy; and he was advanced to the rank of Academician in 1865.

No one who can be counted as quite on the same level with Lewis came into the Society during the next few years. The Associates elected in 1828 were William Evans, known as "Evans of Eton," a vigorous and accomplished landscape painter who had been a pupil of De Wint; and Penry Williams, a Welshman who lived for nearly sixty years in Rome, and painted cleverly, if conventionally, the scenery and country life of Italy. Next year were added Thales Fielding, a younger brother of Copley Fielding, and a painter of pastoral subjects and rustic figures; Alexander Chisholm, who occupied himself with figure compositions from history and modern life; and two lady members, Miss Eliza Sharpe, and Miss Louisa Sharpe, who were both subject painters, and alternated between domestic scenes and motives from romantic fiction. In 1831, the

new Associates were John William Wright, who made a fair reputation by his compositions from Shakespeare and the poets; and Frederick Tayler, a young artist who had studied in Paris under Horace Vernet and Paul Delaroche; and in 1833 there was only one, Frank Stone, who, after exhibiting sentimental subjects with the Society for fourteen years, retired and was elected an Associate of the Royal Academy.

Of all these artists none played a more prominent part in the affairs of the Society than Frederick Tayler. He not only filled the post of President for twelve years, but he also contributed largely to the exhibitions, and earned considerable repute by the excellence of his work. The subjects of his drawings were mostly of a romantic type, and were chosen sometimes from contemporary life and sometimes from that of bygone centuries. He had a particular preference for hunting and hawking scenes, and for pastorals which gave him opportunities of introducing both figures and animals into the same composition; and he executed all his drawings with a directness and certainty of touch that can be unreservedly admired. His retirement from the Presidentship was the outcome of his belief that his advancing years unfitted him for his duties, but he continued to exhibit as an ordinary member until his death, at the age of eighty-seven, in 1889.

Charles Bentley, a sea painter who digressed on occasions into landscapes and coast scenes with figures; George Chambers, another sea painter whose accurate knowledge of his subject and whose skill as a draughtsman of shipping and boats had been obtained by some years' actual experience as a sailor; and Joseph Nash, an architectural draughtsman and figure painter, were made Associates in 1834; and a year later Valentine Bartholomew, who made a special study of flowers, though on rare occasions he exhibited landscapes as well, and James Holland, who had begun as a flower painter, but had by the date of his election turned to a more ambitious type of practice. He left the Society in 1842, but returned in 1856. During this interval he had developed into an artist of exceptional power; he was a masterly executant, and a magnificently expressive sketcher, and there was the truest originality in all his performances. He found the majority of his subjects abroad, in Italy, Portugal, the Tyrol, the Low Countries, and especially in Venice, which last place he painted with something of Turner's brilliancy and charm; but he exhibited also a fair number of British landscapes. He died in 1870, in his seventieth year.

Between 1835 and the end of 1842, only five additions were made

to the Associate class, two, Arthur Glennie and W. Lake Price, in 1837, William Callow in 1838, George Arthur Fripp in 1841, and Octavius Oakley in February 1842. Glennie showed more than four hundred drawings during his connection with the Society, a connection which lasted until his death in January 1890; and these drawings were almost entirely of foreign landscapes. The last thirty-five years of his life he spent at Rome, a city which he had previously visited and sketched; and he travelled extensively in various parts of the Continent. Lake Price painted architecture and figure compositions with architectural backgrounds; he was a pupil of Augustus Pugin and De Wint. He left the Society in 1852. William Callow, who is still living and working, was in his earlier life a famous teacher. He went to Paris to study when he was a boy of sixteen, and remained there for some twelve years, painting and teaching. Among his pupils were many members of the Orleanist royal family. He continued to teach for more than forty years after his return to England in 1841, but despite his many engagements he has found time to execute a large number of admirable drawings of landscape and picturesque buildings, and he has taken a very definite position among our leading water-colour painters. Fripp and Oakley were both men of ability; the former made a reputation by his landscapes and river scenes, and the latter by his rustic figure compositions and water-colour portraits.

After 1842 there was a perceptible increase in the number of elections. In 1843 the successful candidates were William Collingwood Smith, a landscape painter whose method was in many respects akin to that of the earlier water-colourists; Thomas Miles Richardson, the son of a Newcastle artist, and a prolific and skilful worker who before his death in 1890 contributed more than eight hundred landscapes to the Society's exhibitions; and Samuel Palmer, a romanticist who was in his earlier life much influenced by William Blake and John Linnell. He painted more or less idealised landscapes brilliant in illumination and strong in colour, and distinguished by remarkable qualities of poetic invention. The great merit of his work is its notable beauty of sentiment, and it presents an admirable and rather rare combination of naturalism and imagination. Palmer was advanced to full membership in 1854, and he held this position till his death in 1881.

Alfred Downing Fripp, a younger brother of George Fripp, was elected in 1844 with Douglas Morison, a young artist who died only two or three years later, after a brief career in which he showed much promise as an architectural and landscape painter. Fripp

devoted himself to figure subjects illustrating rustic life in Ireland, Scotland, and Wales, and other parts of the British Isles, and he also found a few motives in Italy. In 1845 another William Evans was made an Associate, and with him Samuel Rayner and George Edward Harrison. William Evans, known as "Evans of Bristol" to distinguish him from his namesake who had been elected nearly twenty years before, occupied himself chiefly with Welsh and Italian landscapes, which he treated cleverly, but in a more or less conventional manner. Rayner, an architectural draughtsman who imitated George Cattermole, ceased to belong to the Society in 1851; and Harrison died in October 1846. His drawings were chiefly of fanciful garden scenes with groups of figures. One of his sisters, Miss Maria Harrison, a flower and fruit painter, was made a lady member in 1847; and in the same year George F. Rosenberg, who painted still life and landscapes, was added to the Associates. There was no election in 1846.

However, in 1848 and 1849, eight new artists came into the Society, four in each year. The first batch consisted of George Haydock Dodgson, whose drawings of landscape, coast, and architectural subjects were deservedly popular; Edward Duncan, a marine painter of great ability, who made many successful digressions into pure landscape; Francis William Topham, who was first an engraver and then developed into a very skilful painter of peasant life at home and abroad; and David Cox, Junr., the only son of the great English master and a skilful exponent of his father's artistic creed, though he was not possessed of an equally great endowment of executive capacity. The second batch was made up of three men, John Callow, Joseph John Jenkins, and Charles Branwhite, and one lady, Mrs. Criddle, who, contrary to what may almost be called the custom of her sex, occupied herself with figure subjects instead of still life. John Callow, a younger brother of the more famous William Callow, painted chiefly coast scenes and shipping; he was a successful teacher, and held successively the posts of professor of drawing at the Royal Military College, Addiscombe, master of landscape drawing at the Royal Military Academy, Woolwich, and professor at Queen's College, London. J. J. Jenkins, like Topham, began as an engraver, and then became a painter of figures and landscape. That he was an artist of ability is beyond question, but he will be even better remembered by his literary labours as the historian of the English water-colour school than by his artistic work. Branwhite, who never rose above the rank of Associate, exhibited landscapes for thirty years; he worked in

body colour, and sought his subjects almost entirely in the British Isles.

The most important of the men who were added to the list during the fifties were Carl Haag, and John Gilbert. The election of Carl Haag took place in 1850, three years after he had come to England from Bavaria, his native country. He was already an artist of well-established reputation abroad, and he soon won for himself a position of not less prominence in England by his wonderfully elaborate and highly-finished drawings. During his long career he has treated many types of figure subjects, but his chief preference has been for Eastern scenes, and these he has always handled with vigour and distinction of manner. He still lives, but he is now an honorary instead of an active member of the Society with which he has been associated for more than half a century. In 1850 there were also elected Paul Jacob Naftel, a clever and careful painter of pretty landscapes ; and Miss Nancy Rayner, who died in 1855 ; and in 1851 John Burgess, John Bostock, the former of whom was a spirited draughtsman of architectural subjects, and a very skilful sketcher in black and white. Bostock was deprived of his Associateship in 1855 because he contributed nothing to the exhibition that year. He only showed four drawings altogether, and these were sentimental figure compositions.

John Gilbert began in 1852 a forty-five years' connection with the Society, and one which was as distinguished as it was lengthy. He was then a man of thirty-five, and already well known as a subject painter, and as an extraordinarily prolific and facile illustrator. His illustrative faculty was of the greatest value to him in his water-colour work, for it enabled him to give to his drawings a dramatic quality which is scarcely to be found even in the compositions of such a master as Cattermole, and it affected beneficially even his technical method. The range of his subjects was very wide ; he managed modern subjects with conspicuous skill, but he excelled in romantic and fanciful designs in which he reconstructed in a robust and convincing manner scenes from the life of past centuries, and he drew many of his motives from the plays of Shakespeare and from the works of other great writers. As a splendid colourist and a masterly though essentially unacademic draughtsman, he ranks with the best of the painters who have built up the reputation of the British school ; and as a characteristically English artist he was very well fitted for the prominent part he played in the affairs of a Society which has a just claim to be considered a truly national institution.

In 1852 there were also elected Henry Parsons Riviere, who spent a considerable part of his life in Rome, and found his best material in and about that city ; and Miss Margaret Gillies, a popular artist, who had made a success by her miniature portraits. Her chief exhibits with the Society were sentimental figure compositions. Four more names appear for the first time in the following year, Frederick Burton, Walter Goodall, Samuel Phillips Jackson, and Henry Brandling. Burton, an able artist and a well-known expert, was for some years Director of the National Gallery ; he retired from the Society in 1870, but returned as an honorary member in 1886. Goodall was a figure painter who preferred rustic subjects, and sought them among the peasantry of England and other countries ; and Jackson, a son of the earlier Associate, Samuel Jackson, attained great popularity by his coast scenes and views on the Thames. He was a pleasant colourist, and a careful executant, and he managed subtle effects of atmosphere with much skill. Brandling ceased to exhibit in 1856, and then left the Society. The few drawings by which he was represented in the exhibitions were of architectural subjects.

Seven more Associates were added in the interval between 1853 and 1860: William Collingwood, Charles Davidson, George H. Andrews, Samuel Read, Samuel T. G. Evans, Edward A. Goodall, and Alfred Pizzey Newton. Collingwood was a pupil of J. T. Harding and Samuel Prout, and was best known by his drawings of Alpine scenery, Davidson painted landscapes, Andrews landscapes and marine subjects, and Read architectural motives. Of Read it is recorded that he was the first special artist sent abroad by an illustrated paper to provide drawings for reproduction; he was for nearly forty years associated with the "Illustrated London News," to which paper he began to contribute in 1844. Evans was a son of "Evans of Eton," and can fairly be considered to be entitled to the same designation, for he succeeded to his father's position as art master, and spent his life at Eton. His tragically sudden death in the gallery of the Society is a matter of recent memory. Goodall was an elder brother of Walter Goodall, who had been elected in 1853 ; he came into the Society in 1858, and is happily still counted among its members. A. P. Newton died in 1883, four years after he had attained the rank of full member. He exhibited chiefly Scottish landscapes, but he varied the series of these subjects with occasional drawings of the scenery of foreign countries, especially Italy and Greece.

Birket Foster, an artist whose domestic scenes and landscapes with

rustic figures have always been exceedingly popular, came into the Society in 1860, and with him Frederick Smallfield, who is best known by his figure subjects. Birket Foster died in 1899, after a very successful career, and is now, judging by the prices which his drawings fetch in the sale-rooms, reckoned among the masters of water colour. His popularity has undoubtedly come from the prettiness of his motives and from the minute elaboration of his work. As an exponent of the stippled method of water-colour painting he has a very definite right to attention. No election took place in either 1861 or 1863, but in 1862 three Associates were chosen, Alfred William Hunt, Henry Brittan Willis, and James W. Whittaker. Hunt remained a supporter of the Society until his death in 1896, and took a distinguished place as a landscape painter, a place which he well deserved, for his work can be frankly admired for its delightful sensitiveness and beauty of atmospheric quality. He was a delicate and yet vigorous executant, with an eminently true appreciation of the refinements of technical practice. Brittan Willis painted cattle and landscapes in an able manner, and occasionally attempted figures. Whittaker was well known by his powerful Welsh landscapes. He had begun life as an engraver, but gave up this profession to become a painter. He was drowned in 1876 in a stream near his house at Bettws-y-Coed.

The year 1864 may be called an important one in the history of the Society because it saw the election of Frederick Walker and Edward Burne-Jones. With them came George P. Boyce, a dainty technician whose studies of groups of buildings, and of what may be called, without disparagement, suburban landscapes, are marked by quaint and charming originality ; and Egron Sillif Lundgren, a Swede, who travelled much in many parts of the world and painted the people of the various countries he visited. Frederick Walker, at the time of his election, was only twenty-four, but was already well known as a charming illustrator and an accomplished water-colourist. He became a full member of the Society in 1866, and contributed regularly to its exhibitions until his death in 1875 ; his rare merits were also recognised by the Royal Academy, of which institution he was made an Associate in 1871. To the Society, however, belongs the credit for having shown a practical appreciation of his abilities at a time when the Academy was treating his work with rather scanty consideration. Edward Burne-Jones was advanced to full membership in 1868, but withdrew in 1870 because what he felt to be an unjustifiable accusation of impropriety was brought against a drawing which he had sent in for exhibition. Happily this separation was

not destined to be permanent ; after the lapse of sixteen years he was again enrolled among the members.

Only nine new Associates were added in the period intervening between 1864 and 1870 : Frederick Shields and J. D. Watson in 1865 ; Edward Killingworth Johnson and T. R. Lamont in 1866 ; Basil Bradley, Thomas Danby, and Francis Powell in 1867 ; and William Holman Hunt and George John Pinwell in 1869. Three of these are still living : Frederick Shields, who resigned his membership in 1900 ; Francis Powell, still a regular contributor to the exhibitions of the Society, and the President as well of the Royal Scottish Society of Painters in Water Colours ; and William Holman Hunt, the veteran Pre-Raphaelite, who now holds the position of Honorary member. Of the others, Thomas Danby was the only one who devoted himself solely to landscape. He was a son of Francis Danby, the Associate of the Royal Academy, who achieved a considerable reputation by his strongly treated sunsets ; but he can scarcely be said to have followed in his father's footsteps. The art of the younger Danby was of a much more delicate type, poetic and sensitive, and concerned with subtleties of atmospheric effect, rather than with the vehement and dramatic aspects of nature. J. D. Watson preferred romantic figure subjects, but he also painted landscapes, in which the figures were comparatively unimportant ; and T. R. Lamont, Basil Bradley, and E. K. Johnson must also be counted among the figure men. Pinwell will always be remembered as one of the most brilliant members of that group of illustrators which was headed by Fred Walker, and as a draughtsman of the rarest capacity. He died, at the age of thirty-two, in the same year as Walker, whose junior he was by two years.

In 1870 and 1871 the total number of elections equalled that of the preceding five years. The three Associates for 1870 were W. C. T. Dobson, a skilful figure painter, who was already an Associate of the Royal Academy; William Wood Deane, an architectural draughtsman of very great ability, who died less than three years after his election ; and Arthur H. Marsh, whose pastorals are still to be seen in the exhibitions of the Society. Six artists of distinction were chosen in the following year : Albert Goodwin, the accomplished painter of poetic landscapes ; R. W. Macbeth, now a Royal Academician ; W. M. Hale, widely known by his landscapes and figure subjects ; H. Stacy Marks, a pictorial humorist, who was for many years a special favourite of the public ; J. W. North, a landscape painter of particular delicacy and charm ; and Arthur Boyd Houghton, an illustrator who belonged to the Walker and Pinwell

group. Two of these have died: Houghton in 1875, and Stacy Marks in 1898. R. W. Macbeth subsequently resigned his Associateship, but was re-elected in 1895.

The newcomers in 1872 were Oswald W. Brierley, a painter of sea and shipping, who was afterwards appointed marine painter to Queen Victoria, and received the honour of Knighthood; and H. Clarence Whaite, whose poetic landscapes are still appearing in the Gallery of the Society. There was only one in the following year, Laurence Alma Tadema, the popular Royal Academician. There were two in 1874, Walter Duncan, best known by his romantic figure compositions, and Miss Clara Montalba, a charming colourist, who has devoted herself consistently and with much success to Venetian subjects; and three in 1875, Edward P. Brewtnall, and Edward Radford, both figure painters, and Mrs. Allingham, a follower of Fred. Walker, who shows in her dainty renderings of English rural scenery that she has studied with unusual intelligence the methods of her master.

No less than five Associates were elected in 1876, R. Thorne Waite, whose vigorous and well-designed landscapes show plainly the influence of the earlier leaders of the water-colour school; John Parker, a pleasant painter of rustic scenes; Robert Barnes; Otto Weber, a German artist, well known by his pictures of cattle in landscapes; and Henry Moore, whose superb studies of the sea and masterly landscapes are justly reckoned among the greater achievements of British artists. In his sea pictures especially he has never been equalled, and in his treatment of skies and effects of atmosphere he has few rivals. His association with the Society lasted till his death in 1895. Of the three artists who came in during 1877, one, Edwin Buckman, occupies himself chiefly with compositions of modern figures arranged in a semi-decorative manner; one, Cuthbert Rigby, mainly with landscapes; and the third, Arthur Hopkins, sometimes with figures and sometimes with sea or coast subjects; and next year there was an equally varied group of four, Henry Wallis, whose particular preference was for Eastern scenes; Tom Lloyd, who has for some considerable time painted pastorals with accessory figures; W. E. Lockhart, a historical painter; and Norman Taylor, who is best known by his drawings of rustic life. In 1879 appear Herbert M. Marshall, deservedly popular as a practical and sincere advocate of the claims of London to be considered a happy hunting-ground for the sketcher; and Mrs. Helen Angell, who died only five years later. She handled still-life subjects with exceptional skill, and was by many people regarded as the legitimate successor of William Hunt.

The most prominent of the four artists who were made Associates in 1880 was Ernest Albert Waterlow, who was destined seventeen years later to succeed Sir John Gilbert in the office of President, and to fill with distinction a post which is as responsible as it is honourable. With him came in Walter Field, an earnest student of the beauties of the Thames; Thomas J. Watson, a pleasant and unaffected painter of quiet landscapes; and W. Eyre Walker, whose subtle sense of colour and sensitiveness to delicate refinements of atmospheric effect have been convincingly displayed in the many attractive drawings he has since shown in the Gallery. An artist of a different type was elected in 1881—George Du Maurier, the draughtsman whose contributions to "Punch" were long counted among the most attractive features of that journal. At the same time appeared Wilmot Pilsbury, a clever student of nature, with a real faculty for choosing and presenting her most attractive aspects.

Another large addition was made to the list in 1882 and 1883, Charles Gregory, Samuel J. Hodson, Richard Beavis, J. Jessop Hardwick, and Miss Constance Phillott, in the former year; and Edward J. Poynter, Frank Holl, John R. Burr, Henry G. Glindoni, J. Henry Henshall, and William J. Wainwright, in the latter. With the exception of Samuel J. Hodson, who seeks his subjects chiefly in the picturesque streets and market-places of quaint old towns, and J. J. Hardwick, who digresses frequently from flowers into pure landscape, these must all be counted as figure painters. Some of the others, like Sir Edward Poynter and Richard Beavis, have not confined themselves to one class of motive, and have exhibited sometimes landscapes and sometimes figures as opportunity offered; but the chief contributions of Charles Gregory have been idealised rustic subjects; of J. H. Henshall, modern life incidents; of H. G. Glindoni, groups illustrating the manners and customs of the people of past generations, when social existence was gayer and more picturesque than it is to-day; and of W. J. Wainwright, studies of types, mediæval and modern, which give him scope for the exercise of his wonderful executive powers, and for the display of his love of sumptuous colour. Miss Phillott paints pretty figures and faces with much grace and delicacy. Frank Holl's name remained on the list of Associates till his death in 1888; but one drawing which he exhibited in 1883 was all that ever represented him in the Gallery.

Neither of the two Associates for 1884 were connected with the Society for any very long period. Miss Mary Forster, who afterwards became Mrs. Lofthouse, died in the following year, so that her tenderly-treated landscapes were seen in only four exhibitions; and

Albert Moore's death occurred after the lapse of nine years. The total number of drawings by which he was represented was inconsiderable, but they were distinguished by all the admirable qualities of design and colour management and by all the fascinating individuality of manner which make his oil paintings so memorable. It is a matter for great regret that he did not live to take a more prominent part in the activities of the Society, for he struck a new note in water-colour painting and proved its applicability to a type of figure composition that no other artist has ever attempted. Moreover, the technical beauties that have secured for his pictures a place apart in British art lost none of their persuasiveness in the process of translation into another medium. His touch was as certain, his draughtsmanship as sure and masterly, and his rare decorative sense as perfectly displayed in his water colours as in his larger and more elaborate canvases.

For the next few years there was no very rapid increase in the number of new men admitted. Two were elected in 1885, Charles Roberson and Heywood Hardy, the former of whom died about nine years afterwards, and the latter ceased to exhibit in 1902; two in 1886, David Murray, now a Royal Academician and an extremely popular painter of attractive landscapes, and Colin Bent Phillip, the son of a famous Academician and a water colourist with a preference for mountain scenes, which he treats with remarkable breadth and largeness of style; and two in 1887, Robert W. Allan and Miss Maud Naftel. R. W. Allan is still a busy member of the Society, and his broad, expressive drawings of sea and coast subjects, and of scenes in picturesque towns abroad, are among the most striking features of the periodical shows; Miss Naftel, a daughter of Paul Naftel, and herself an artist of the greatest promise, died only three years after her election. This sequence of small additions was broken in 1888 when four Associates, Walter Crane, Alfred Edward Emslie, Arthur Melville and Miss Edith Martineau, were chosen, and the President of the Royal Academy, Sir Frederick Leighton, was made a full member without passing through the Associate rank. The death of Arthur Melville, one of the most brilliantly accomplished of the many able artists who have belonged to the Society, is a matter of recent memory. His chief contributions were Eastern, Spanish, or Venetian scenes painted with superb directness and with a consummate knowledge of craftsmanship. Walter Crane sends sometimes landscapes, sometimes figure subjects, stamped always with his particular personality; A. E. Emslie, pastorals and imaginative compositions of figures; and Miss Martineau began with figures,

but has since diverged almost entirely into landscape. 1889 saw the election of George Clausen, one of the most original of living painters of rustic subjects, and George Lawrence Bulleid, who has confined himself almost entirely to classic motives treated with suave elegance and elaborated with minute care.

During the nineties eighteen Associates were enrolled, a number which by its comparative smallness shows how careful the Society is in its selection of only those artists whom it considers to be indisputably worthy of recognition. One new name appears in 1890, that of C. Napier Hemy, the painter of marine and coast pictures; but there are three in 1891, Charles E. Fripp, Edward Robert Hughes, and Thomas M. Rooke. C. E. Fripp is a son of George Fripp, who entered the Society exactly fifty years earlier, and is, perhaps, most widely known by his work as a war correspondent, though he has also attracted attention by his sketches in Japan and in other distant countries. E. R. Hughes has made a distinguished place for himself among the painters of subjects from romance, and especially from Italian tales and legends; and T. M. Rooke, though he has exhibited figure drawings on many occasions, is most successful as a student of picturesque architecture. Lionel Smythe, an Associate of the Royal Academy, who has a very attractive manner of dealing with what may be called rustic sentiment; and Robert Little, a painter of romantic landscape, who is endowed with a sumptuous sense of colour and a keen appreciation of decorative essentials, were elected in 1892; and in 1893 Hubert von Herkomer, that amazingly versatile and accomplished artist, whose brilliant achievements in water-colour painting mark him as a specially qualified exponent of this branch of practice. He has been a strong supporter of the Society, and has sent to its shows a large number of drawings of memorable quality.

The one newcomer in 1894 was John Reinhard Weguelin, a painter of the nude figure, with a very charming appreciation of graces of composition and a most sensitive instinct for subtleties of colour combination. His drawings have a remarkable degree of distinction as technical performances, and are full of dainty fancy. In 1895 R. W. Macbeth returned, and with him was elected Edwin Austin Abbey, the American artist who, after achieving world-wide repute as an illustrator, has now taken his place among the most successful of our producers of historical and romantic pictures. He has not been a frequent contributor to the exhibitions of the Society. The following year saw the accession of John M. Swan, one of the greatest animal painters whom this country can claim, and a water-

colourist of memorable power; Henry Silkstone Hopwood, whose broadly handled studies of cottage interiors have unquestionable beauty of rich and low-toned colour; and two ladies, Miss Rose Barton, a pupil of Paul Naftel, and known both by her drawings of children and by her studies of London streets, and Miss Mildred Anne Butler, whose drawings of animal life and birds alternate with records of pretty garden subjects. Louis Davis, a decorative artist and designer of much ingenuity, was elected in 1898—there was no successful candidate in 1897—and with him James Paterson, a Scottish landscape painter with a rarely broad and telling method and a sumptuous sense of colour; and there were three additions in 1899: Edwin Alexander, who may be credited with the discovery of a new and wholly admirable manner of dealing with flowers and still life; Alfred Parsons, an Associate of the Royal Academy, whose landscapes and gardens are always notable for their sunny brilliancy and high finish; and Mrs. Elizabeth Stanhope Forbes, an artist of robust and attractive originality. Her chief contributions have been rustic groups or figures in costume with landscape backgrounds.

The five years, 1900 to 1904, have seen the addition of thirteen Associates, Walter Bayes in 1900; Reginald Barratt, Robert Anning Bell, James Walter West, and Miss Minnie Smythe, in 1901; Arthur Rackham and Miss Eleanor Fortescue-Brickdale in 1902; Edmund J. Sullivan, and Miss Alice M. Swan in 1903; and John Singer Sargent, D. Y. Cameron, Henry Scott Tuke, and F. Cadogan Cowper in 1904. Walter Bayes paints prettily imaginative landscapes with accessory figures; Reginald Barratt, Venetian architecture, with admirable delicacy and sureness of draughtsmanship; R. A. Bell, figure compositions, in which he shows a splendid romantic sentiment and great power of design; J. W. West, figures in costume treated with exquisite charm; and Miss Smythe, a daughter of Lionel Smythe, follows worthily in her father's footsteps. Arthur Rackham is one of the most inexhaustibly imaginative painters of poetic and grotesque fantasies whom our water-colour school has ever produced, Miss Fortescue-Brickdale, a member of the new Pre-Raphaelite school and an artist of high ability, E. J. Sullivan, an accomplished illustrator, and Miss Swan, a sister of J. M. Swan, paints flowers and figures in costume in which she displays unusual technical powers. The last four include two members of the Academy, J. S. Sargent, the most brilliant and audacious of living painters, and H. S. Tuke, whose sea and figure pictures are keenly appreciated by all lovers of sincere and well-studied art; D. Y. Cameron, famous as an etcher, is held in not less esteem as a painter

of romantic and finely conceived landscapes ; and F. C. Cowper, another modern Pre-Raphaelite, promises to take high rank among our water colourists. The Associates elected in the spring of 1905 were H. E. Crocket and Herbert Alexander. Decidedly the Society by electing artists so dissimilar in views and intentions has plainly signified at the end of the first century of its history its adherence to the same enlightened and broad-minded policy which it adopted in the earliest years of its career.

A. L. Baldry.

PLATES

(By Permission of Messrs. Thos. Agnew & Sons.)

PLATE I. "EARLY MORNING." BY G. BARRET, JUN.

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PLATE III. "WHITBY." BY COPLEY FIELDING.

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PLATE IV. "BLACKBERRY GATHERERS." BY DAVID COX.

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PLATE V. "ANGLERS." BY J. LINNELL.

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PLATE VI. "THE POISONED CUP." BY G. CATTERMOLE.

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PLATE XI. "YOUNG ANGLERS." BY BIRKET FOSTER.

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(By Permission of Gen. Sir Henry Smyth.)

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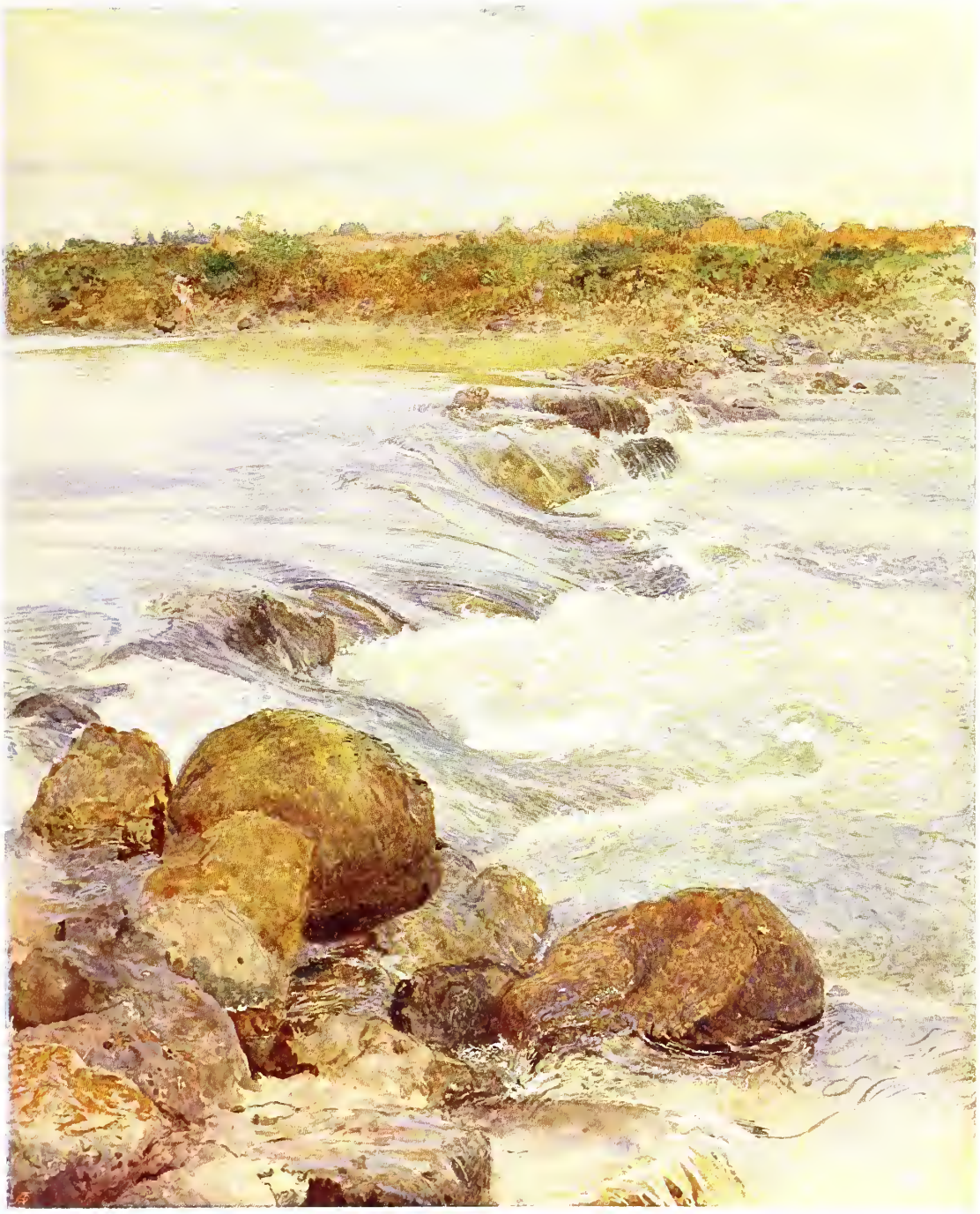
PLATE XV. "THE PARIS PAWN-SHOP." BY G. J. PINWELL.



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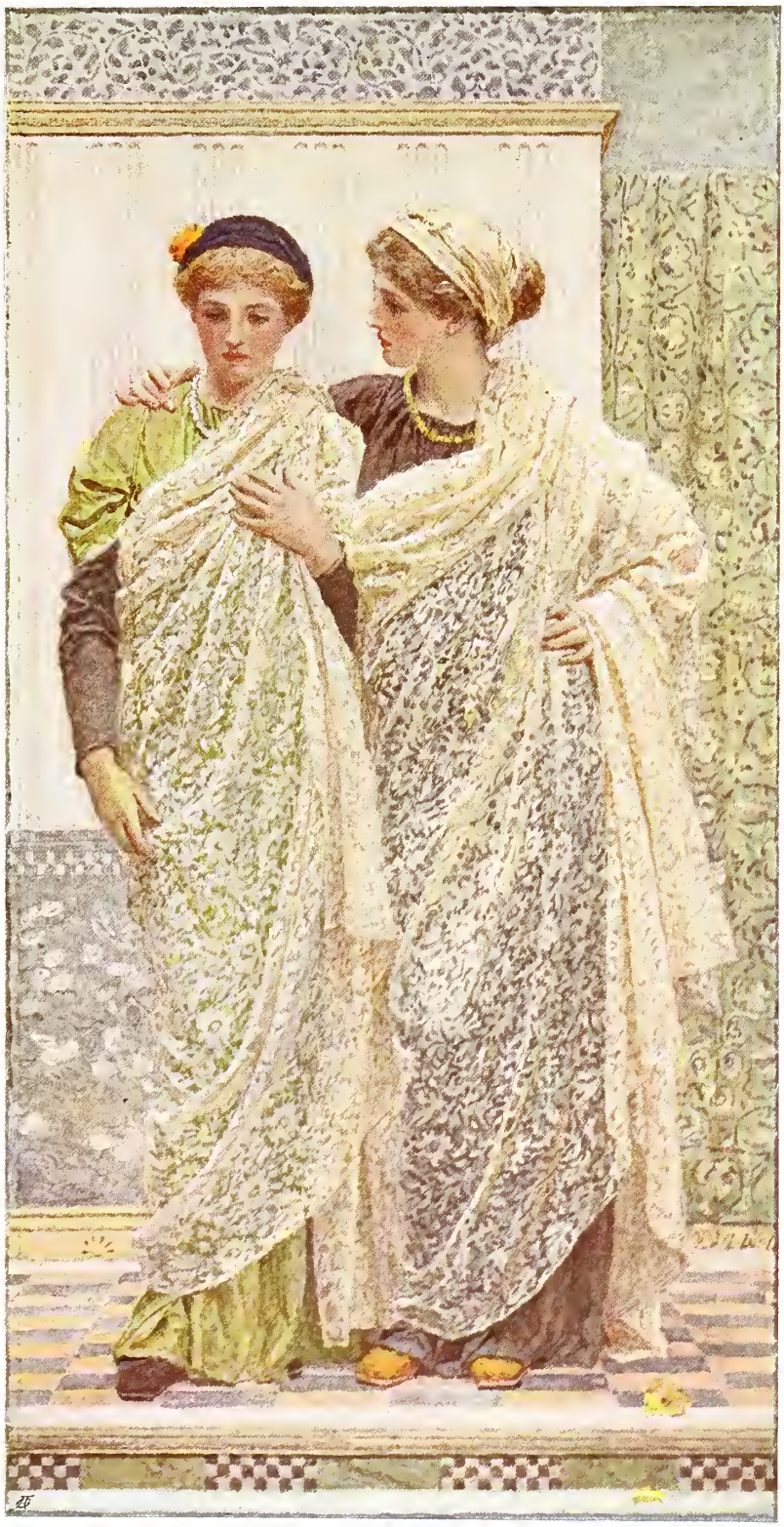

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